

DIALOGUES

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OF

THE DEAD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

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[PREFACE.]

LUCIAN among the Ancients, and among the Moderns Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, and Monf. Fontenelle, have written DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD with applause. But in our language nothing of that kind has been published worthy of notice: for the very ingenious and learned DIALOGUES written by Mr Hurde are all supposed to have past between *living persons*. The Plan I have followed takes in a much greater compass: it brings before us the history of all times and all nations; presents to the choice of the Writer all Characters of remarkable persons, which may best be opposed to or compared with each other; and is, perhaps, one of the most agreeable methods that can be employed of conveying to the

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mind any critical, moral, or political observations ; because the *dramatic spirit* which may be thrown into them, gives them more life than they could have in Dissertations, however well written. And sometimes a *new dress* may make an *old truth* more pleasing to those whom the mere love of Novelty betrays into error, as it frequently does not only the *wits* but the *sages* of these days. If the Author of these DIALOGUES has in any degree accomplished his purpose, this little Work will be of some use. If he has failed, he may at least induce abler Pens to execute better what he has attempted.

It will be proper to observe to the Reader, that in the above-mentioned Authors *the DEAD* are supposed to know what has past in subsequent times, and in other nations, as well as their own : without which supposition no conversations between persons who lived in different ages, and different countries, could be well carried on. Thus, in Fenelon's *Dialogue between Plato and Aristotle*, the former speaks as having read the Works of the latter, which were not composed till



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after his death. In another, by the same author, Gelon finds fault with the conduct of Dion : and in that between Solon and Justinian, the Athenian censures the government of the Roman legislator, and talks of the *History of Procopius* as if he had read it. More instances might be given ; but these are sufficient. Elysium, Minos, Mercury, Charon, and Styx, are also necessary *Allegories* in this way of writing. If they should offend any pious or critical ears, I shall defend myself by the solemn declaration which is always annexed by the Italian writers to works where they are obliged to use such expressions : “ Se havessi nominato *Fato*, *Fortuna*, *Destino*, *Elysio*, *Stige*, &c. sono scherzi di penna poetica, non sentimenti di animo catolico *.”

I have likewise taken the liberty that others have used, to give my *DIALOGUES* different dates, as suited best with the purpose to

* If I have named *Fate*, *Fortune*, *Destiny*, *Elysium*, *Styx*, &c. they are only the sports of a poetical pen, not the sentiments of a catholic mind.

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which they were written, supposing some of them to have past in this present year, and others immediately after the death of one of the Speakers there introduced.

The *three* last DIALOGUES are written by a different hand; as I am afraid would have appeared but too plainly to the Reader without my having told it. If the friend who favoured me with them should write any more, I shall think the Public owes me a great obligation, for having excited a genius so capable of uniting delight with instruction, and giving to Knowledge and Virtue those graces, which the wit of the age has too often employed all its skill to bestow upon Folly and Vice.

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DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD.

DIALOGUE I.

Lord FALKLAND. Mr HAMPDEN.

Ld FALKLAND.

ARE not you surpris'd to see me in Elysium, *Mr Hampden*?

Mr HAMPDEN.

I was going to put the same question to you, for doubtless your Lordship thought me a rebel.

Ld FALKLAND.

And certainly you thought me an apostate from the Commonwealth, and a supporter of tyranny. Did not you see me in that odious light?

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MR HAMPDEN.

I own that I did, and I don't wonder at the severity of your thoughts about me. The heat of the times deprived us both of our natural candour. Yet, I will frankly confess to you here, that, before I died, I began to see in our party enough to justify your apprehensions, that the Civil War, which we had entered into from generous motives, from a desire to preserve our free Constitution, would end very unhappily, and perhaps, in the issue, destroy that Constitution, even by the arms of those who pretended to be most zealous for it.

LD FALKLAND.

And I will as frankly confess to you that I saw in the court and camp of the King so much to alarm me for the liberty of my Country, if our arms were successful, that I dreaded a victory little less than I did a defeat, and had nothing in my mouth but the word *peace*, which I repeated with passionate fondness in every council at which I assisted.

MR HAMPDEN.

I wished for peace too, as much as your Lordship; but I saw no hopes of it. The

insincerity of the King, and the influence of the Queen, made it impossible to trust to his promises or declarations. Nay, what reliance could we reasonably have upon *Laws* designed to restrain the power of the Crown, except they were such as put that power into our own hands, after he had violated *the Bill of Rights*, obtained with such difficulty, and containing so clear an assertion of the privileges which had been in dispute? If his conscience would allow him to break an Act of Parliament *made to determine the bounds of the Royal Prerogative*, because he thought *that the Royal Prerogative could have no bounds*, what legal ties could bind such a conscience? or what security could his people find against the malignity of such an opinion, except taking from him *the power of the sword*, and enabling themselves to defend the laws he had past?

Ld FALKLAND.

There is truth, too much truth, in what you have said—I cannot deny it. But by taking from the King *the power of the sword*, you in reality took *all power*. It was converting the government into a *Democracy*; and if he had submitted to it, he would only have had the name of a King. The sceptre would have been held by those

who had the sword ; or we must have lived in a state of perpetual anarchy, without any balance or force in the government ; a state which could not have lasted long, but would have ended in a republic or absolute power.

MR HAMPDEN.

Your reasoning seems unanswerable. But what could we do ? Let Dr Laud and those other divines who led the King's conscience, and fixed such principles in it as made him unfit to govern his kingdom, though with many good qualities, and some great ones ; let them, I say, answer for the mischiefs they brought upon him and the nation.

LD FALKLAND.

They were indeed much to blame ; but those principles had gained ground before their times, and seemed the principles of our Church, in opposition to the Jesuits, who had gone too far in the other extreme.

MR HAMPDEN.

It is a disgrace to our Church to have taken up such opinions ; and I will venture to prophesy, that in future times our clergy must renounce them, or they will be turned against them by those who mean

their destruction. Suppose a *Papish King* on the throne; Will the clergy adhere to passive obedience and non-resistance? If they do, they deliver up their religion to Rome; if they do not, their practice will confute their own doctrines.

Ld FALKLAND.

Nature, Sir, will in-time be sure to set right whatever opinion contradicts her great laws, let who will be the teacher. But, indeed, the more I reflect on those miserable times in which we both lived, the more I think it a favour of Providence to us that we were cut off so soon, and delivered by death from the evils that necessarily were coming upon us. *The most grievous Misfortune to a virtuous Man is to be in such a state, that he can hardly so act as to approve his own conduct.* In such a state we both were. We could scarce make a step, either forward or backward, without hazard of guilt, or at least of dishonour. We were entangled in connections with men who did not mean so well as ourselves, or did not judge so rightly. If we offered to stop them, they thought us too cold or false to the cause: if we went on with them, we run upon rocks, which we saw very clearly, but could not avoid; nor yet could we seek a quiet retreat. The

times and our characters would not allow it. Inaction would in us have been cowardice and desertion. To complete the public calamities, a Religious Fury mixed itself, on both sides, with the rage of our Civil dissensions, more frantic than *that*, more implacable, more averse to all healing measures. The most intemperate counsels were thought the most *pious*, and a regard to the laws, if they opposed the suggestions of these fiery Zealots, was deemed *irreligion*. This added new difficulties to what was before but too difficult in itself, the settling of a nation, which no longer could put any confidence in the King, nor lay more restraints on the royal authority without destroying the balance of the whole constitution. In this situation, the balls that pierced our hearts were directed thither by the hands of our gaurdian angels themselves, to save us from horrors we could not support, and perhaps from a guilt our natures abhorred.

MR HAMPDEN.

I think they were: and if I was again to return into life, the experience I have had would make me very cautious how I kindled the sparks of Civil War in my country: for I have seen that, when once

that fire is lighted, no man can tell how far it will spread. It is not in the power of the head of a party to say to the conflagration, *Thus far shalt thou go, and here shalt thou stop.*

Ld FALKLAND.

The conversation we have now had, as well as the reflections of my own mind, would, if I were condemned to my body again, produce another effect upon me. They would teach me great moderation and candour in my judgments of men who might differ from me in difficult scenes of public action: they would entirely cure me of the *spirit of party*; and they would make me think that, as in the Church, so also in the State, no evil is more to be feared than an enthusiastic and rancorous zeal.

DIALOGUE II.

LOUIS LE GRAND. PETER THE GREAT.

LOUIS.

Who could have thought, when you were learning the trade of a shipwright in the dockyards of Holland, that you would become my rival in fame, and acquire, like me, the surname of *Great*?

PETER.

Which of us deserved that title best, Posterity will decide. But my greatness appeared in that very act which seemed to you a debasement.

LOUIS.

The dignity of a King does not easily stoop to such mean employments. For my own part, I never cared to appear to the eyes of my subjects or foreigners, but in all the splendour and majesty of royal power.

PETER.

Had I remained on the throne of Russia, as my ancestors did, environed with all the pomp of barbarous greatness, I should have been idolized by my people as much, at least, as you were by the French. My despotism was more absolute, their servitude was more humble. But then I could not have reformed their ill customs; I could not have taught them arts, learning, navigation, and war; I could not have turned them from brutes into men. In this the force of my genius appeared, beyond any comparison with all other kings, that I could think it no degradation or diminution of greatness, to descend from my throne, and go and work in the docks of a foreign republic; to serve as a private sailor in my own fleets, and as a common soldier in my own army; till I had raised myself by my merit in the several steps and degrees of promotion, to the highest command, and given my subjects a lesson of the necessity of a regular subordination in the sea and land service, by my own practice, more convincing to them than any instructions,

LOUIS.

I am forced to confess that it was a great act, and that, when I thought it a mean one, my censure arose from the ridicule thrown upon it by some of my courtiers, whose minds were too narrow to comprehend or discern the greatness of your's in that situation.

PETER.

It was an act of more heroism than any ever done by Alexander or Cæsar: nor would I exchange my glory with theirs. They both did great things; but they were at the head of great nations, far superior in valour and military skill to those with whom they contended. I was the King of a barbarous people, undisciplined, ignorant, hard to instruct. My enemies were at first so superior to my subjects, that ten thousand of them could beat a hundred thousand Russians. They had powerful fleets: I had not a ship. The King of Sweden was a prince of the most intrepid courage, assisted by generals of the most consummate knowledge in war, and served by soldiers so disciplined, that they were the admiration and terror of Europe. Yet in the end I vanquished these soldiers; I

drove that prince to take refuge in Turkey; I won battles at sea, as well as at land; I *new-created* my people; I gave them arts, science, policy; I made them the most respected of nations; I enabled them to keep all the powers of the North in awe and dependance, to give kings to Poland, to check and intimidate the Ottoman Emperors, to mix with great weight in the affairs of all Europe. What other man has ever done such wonders as these? Read all the records of ancient and modern times, and find, if you can, one fit to be put in comparison with me!

LOUIS.

Your glory would indeed have been supreme and unequalled if, in civilizing your subjects, you had reformed the brutality of your own manners, and the barbarous vices of your own nature. But, alas! the legislator and reformer of Russia was drunken and cruel.

PETER.

My drunkenness I confess: nor will I plead, to excuse it, the example of Alexander. It was a stain on his character as well as mine, and it inflamed the tempers of both, which were by nature too fiery, into

extravagant passions of anger, and acts of which our reason, when sober, was ashamed. But for my cruelty I have some excuse. Fear of punishment was in the hearts of my barbarous subjects the only principle of obedience. They could not be governed with a mild curb and gentle hand. To make them respect the Royal Authority, it was necessary to arm it with thunder and lightning, and all the terrors of rage. You had a pliant people to govern, a people whose polished and delicate minds could be ruled, like a fine managed horse, with an easy and gentle rein. Your praise was a spur sufficient to excite them to obey your commands, and run the race of glory with all their strength. The fear of shame did more with them than the fear of the *knout* could do with the Russians. Your government might be therefore less rigid than mine; and the ferocity of my nature was in some degree necessary to the great work I had to perform. But what excuse can you find for the cruelties which you exercised on your *Protestant* subjects? They had been ever obedient and affectionate to you. They desired nothing but to live under the protection of laws you yourself had confirmed; and they repaid that protection by the most hearty zeal for your

service. Yet these did you force, by the most inhuman severities, either to quit the religion in which they were bred, and which their consciences still retained, or to leave their native land, and endure all the woes of perpetual exile. It makes one shudder to think that such orders could come from a gay polished court, from a King engaged in all the elegant pleasures which humanize and soften the heart; that such orders, I say, should be given by him, as the most savage Tartars could hardly have executed without remorse and compassion!

LOUIS.

It was not my nature, but my religion, that dictated these severities. My confessor told me they would atone for all my sins.

PETER.

In defending yourself you condemn your religion. Had I believed in my patriarch, as you believed in your priest, I should not have been the great King that I was.—But I will press you no farther upon that matter. We have both been illustrious in different ways. The memory of us both is dear to our subjects, and they are proud of having obeyed us, which is the highest praise to a

King. But there is this capital distinction between us. The pomp and pageantry of state were necessary to your greatness: mine was independent of those outward trappings. I was great in myself, great in the energy and powers of my mind; great in the superiority and *sovereignty* of my soul over all other men.

DIALOGUE III.

PLATO. FENELON.

PLATO.

WELCOME to Elysium, O Thou! the most pure, the most gentle, the most refined disciple of Philosophy that the world, in modern times, has produced! Sage *Fenelon*! welcome!—I need not name myself to you. Our souls must, by sympathy, know one another.

FENELON.

I know you to be *Plato*, the most amiable of all the disciples of Socrates, and the philosopher of all Antiquity whom I the most desired to resemble.

PLATO.

Homer and Orpheus are very impatient to see you in that region of these happy fields which their shades inhabit. They both acknowledge you to be a great Poet, tho' you have never written a verse; and they are now busy in weaving for you un-

fading wreaths of the finest and sweetest Elysian flowers. But I will lead you from them to the sacred Grove of Philosophy, on the highest hill of Elysium, where the air is most pure and most serene. I will conduct you to the Fountain of Wisdom, in which you will see, as in your own writings, the fair image of Virtue perpetually reflected. It will raise in you more love than was felt by Narcissus, when he saw his own face in the unruffled spring. But you shall not pine, as he did, for a shadow. The goddess herself shall meet your embraces, and mix with your soul.

FENELON.

I find you retain the same allegorical and poetical style which you were so fond of in some of your writings. Mine run sometimes into poetry too, particularly in my *Telemachus*, which I meant to make a kind of Epic composition. But I dare not rank myself among the great Poets, nor pretend to any equality in oratory with You, the most eloquent of philosophers, on whose lips the Attic bees distilled all their honey.

PLATO.

The French language is not so harmo-

nious as the Greek; yet you have given a sweetness and melody to it, which equally charms the ear and the heart. When one reads your Compositions, one thinks that one hears Apollo's lyre, strung by the hands of the Graces, and tuned by the Muses. The Idea of a *perfect King*, which you have exhibited in your *Telemachus*, far excels, in my own Judgment, my imaginary *Republic*. Your *Dialogues* breathe the pure spirit of Virtue, of unaffected good sense, of just criticism, of fine taste. They are in general as superior to your countryman Fontenelle's, as reason is to false wit, or truth to affectation. The greatest fault of them is, that some are too short.

FENELON.

It has been objected to them, and I am sensible of it myself, that they are too full of *Common-place Morals*: but I wrote them for the instruction of a young Prince; and one cannot too strongly imprint on the minds of those who are born to rule over nations the most simple truths: because, as they grow up, the flattery of a court will try to disguise and hide from them those truths, and to eradicate from their hearts the love of their duty, if it has not taken there a very deep root.

✱ PLATO.

It is indeed the peculiar misfortune of princes, that they are often instructed with very great care in the refinements of Policy, and not taught the first principles of Moral obligations, or taught so superficially, that the *virtuous Man* is soon lost in the *corrupt Politician*. But the lessons you gave your young Prince are so graced by the charms of your eloquence, that the oldest and wisest men may read them with pleasure. All your Works are embellished with a sublime and agreeable imagination, which gives to simplicity elegance, and dignity to the most vulgar and obvious truths. I have heard, indeed, that your countrymen are less sensible of the beauty of your genius and style than some of their neighbours. What has so much depraved their taste?

FENELON.

That which depraved the taste of the Romans after the Age of Augustus; an immoderate love of *wit*, of *paradox*, of *refinement*. The works of their writers, like the faces of their women, must be painted and adorned with artificial embellishments to attract their regards: and thus

the natural beauty is lost. But it is no wonder if few of them esteem my *Telemachus* in a Political light; the maxims inculcated there being such as they think inconsistent with the grandeur of their monarchy, and with the splendour of a refined and opulent nation. They seem to be falling into opinions, that the chief end of Society is to procure men the pleasures of luxury; that an elegant taste of voluptuous enjoyments is the perfection of merit; and that a king, who is gallant, magnificent, liberal, who builds a fine palace, who furnishes it well with statues and pictures, who encourages the fine arts, and makes them subservient to every modish vice, who has a restless ambition, a perfidious policy, and a spirit of conquest, is better for them than a Numa, or a Marcus Aurelius. Whereas, to check the excesses of luxury, those excesses I mean which enfeeble the spirit and strength of a nation; to ease the people, as much as is possible, of the burthen of taxes; to give them the blessings of peace and tranquillity, when they can be obtained without loss or dishonour; to make them frugal and hardy, and masculine in their temper, or their bodies and minds, that they may be the fitter for war when it does come upon them; but above

all to watch over their morals, and discourage whatever may taint or corrupt them, is the great business of government, and ought to be always the principal object of wise legislatures. Certainly *that is the happiest country which has most virtue in it*: and to the eye of right reason the poorest Swiss canton is a much nobler state than the kingdom of France, if it has more liberty, better morals, a more settled tranquillity, more moderation in prosperity, more firmness in danger.

PLATO.

Your notions are just, and if your country explodes them, she will not be long the first nation in Europe. Her declension is begun, her ruin approaches.—But lest you should think, from the praise I have given you, that flattery can find a place in Elysium, allow me to lament, with the grief of a friend, that a man so superior to all other follies could give into the *reveries* of a Madame Guyon, a distracted Enthusiast. How strange was it to see *the two great lights of France*, you and the Bishop of Meaux, engaged in a controversy, whether *a mad woman was a Heretic or a saint*!

FENELON.

I confess my own weakness, and the ridiculousness of the dispute: but did not you also give into some *reveries* about *Divine love*, in which you talked unintelligibly even to yourself?

PLATO.

I *felt* something more than I could *express*.

FENELON.

I had my *feelings*, too, as fine and as lively as your's. But we should both have done better to have avoided those subjects, in which *sentiment* took the place of *cool reason* and *sober truth*.

DIALOGUE IV.

Mr ADDISON, Dr SWIFT.

Dr SWIFT.

SURELY, *Addison*, Fortune was exceedingly bent upon playing the fool (a humour her Ladyship, as well as most other ladies of very great quality is frequently in) when she made you *a Minister of State*, and me *a Divine*!

ADDISON.

I must confess we were both of us out of our elements. But you don't mean to insinuate, that if our destinies had been reversed, all would have been right?

SWIFT.

Yes, I do.—You would have made an excellent Bishop, and I should have governed Great Britain, as I did Ireland, with an absolute sway, while I talked of nothing but Liberty, Property, and so forth.

ADDISON.

You governed the mob of Ireland; but I never heard that you governed the kingdom. A nation and a mob are different things.

SWIFT.

Ay; so you fellows that have no genius for Politics may suppose. But there are times when, by putting himself at the head of the mob, an able man may get to the head of the nation. Nay, there are times when the nation itself is a mob, and may be treated as such by a skilful observer.

ADDISON.

I don't deny the truth of your axiom: but is there no danger that, from the vicissitudes of human affairs, the favourite of the mob should be mobbed in his turn?

SWIFT.

Sometimes there may; but I risked it, and it answered my purpose. Ask the Lord Lieutenants who were forced to pay court to me, instead of my courting them, whether they did not feel my superiority. And if I could make myself so considerable when I was only a dirty Dean of St Patrick's, without a seat in either House of

parliament, what would I have done, if Fortune had placed me in England, uncumbered with a gown, and in a situation to make myself heard in the House of Lords or of Commons?

ADDISON.

You would doubtless have done very marvellous acts! Perhaps you might have then been as zealous a Whig as Lord Whar-ton himself. Or, if the Whigs had offended *the Statesman*, as they unhappily did *the Doctor*, who knows but you might have brought in the Pretender? Pray let me ask you one question between you and me. If you had been First Minister under that Prince, would you have tolerated the Protestant religion, or not—?

SWIFT.

Ha! Mr Secretary, are you witty upon me? Do you think, because Sunderland took a fancy to make you a great man in the state, that he could also make you as great in wit as Nature made me? No, no; wit is like grace, it must come *from above*. You can no more get *that* from the King, than My Lords the Bishops can *the other*. And though I will own you had some, yet believe me, my friend, it was no match

for mine. I think you have not vanity enough to pretend to a competition with me.

ADDISON.

I have been often told by my friends that I was rather too modest. So, if you please, I will not decide this dispute for myself, but refer it to Mercury, the God of Wit, who happens just now to be coming this way, with a soul he has newly brought to the Shades.

Hail, divine Hermes! A question of precedence in the class of Wit and Humour, over which you preside, having arisen between me and my countryman, Dr *Swift*, we beg leave —

MERCURY.—Dr *Swift*! I rejoice to see you—How does my old Lad? How does honest *Lemuel Gulliver*? Have you been in *Lilliput* lately, or in the *Flying Island*, or with your good nurse *Glumdalclitch*? Pray, when did you eat a crust with Lord *Peter*? Is *Jack* as mad still as ever? I hear the poor fellow is almost got well by more gentle usage. If he had but more food he would be as much in his senses as brother *Martin* himself. But *Martin*, they tell me, has spawned a strange brood of fellows called *Methodists*, *Moravians*, *Hutchinsonians*, who are madder than *Jack* was in his

worst days. It is a pity you are not alive again to be *at them*. They would be excellent food for your tooth; and a sharp tooth it was, as ever was placed in the gum of a mortal; ay, and a strong one too. The hardest food would not break it, and it could pierce the thickest skulls. Indeed it was like one of Cerberus's teeth: one should not have thought it belonged to a man — Mr *Addison*! I beg your pardon; I should have spoken to you sooner; but I was so struck with the sight of the Doctor, that I forgot, for a time, the respects due to you.

SWIFT.

Addison, I think our dispute is decided before the Judge has heard the cause.

ADDISON.

I own it is, in your favour, and I submit — but —

MERCURY. — Don't be discouraged, friend *Addison*. Apollo, perhaps, would have given a different judgment. I am a wit, and a rogue, and a foe to all dignity. *Swift* and I naturally like one another. He worships me more than Jupiter, and I honour him more than Homer. But yet, I assure you, I have a great value for you.

—*Sir Roger de Coverly, Will Honeycomb, Will Whimble, the Country-gentleman in the Freeholder*, and twenty more characters, drawn with the finest strokes of natural wit and humour in your excellent Writings, seat you very high in the class of *my Authors*, though not quite so high as the Dean of St Patrick's. Perhaps you might have come nearer to him, if the decency of your nature, and cautiousness of your judgment, would have given you leave. But if in the force and spirit of his wit he has the advantage, how much does he yield to you in all the polite and elegant graces; in the fine touches of delicate sentiment; in developing the secret springs of the soul; in shewing all the mild lights and shades of a character; in marking distinctly every line, and every soft gradation of tints, which would escape the common eye! Who ever painted like you the beautiful parts of human nature, and brought them out from under the shade even of the greatest simplicity, or the most ridiculous weaknesses; so that we are forced to admire, and feel that we *venerate*, even while we are laughing! *Swift* could do nothing that approaches to this.—He could draw an ill face very well, or caricature a good one with a masterly hand: but there was all his power;

and, if I am to speak as a God, a worthless power it is. Your's is divine. It tends to improve and exalt human nature.

SWIFT.

Pray, good Mercury, (if I may have leave to say a word for myself) do you think that my talent was of no use to *correct* human nature? Is whipping of no use to mend naughty boys?

MERCURY. Men are not so patient of whipping as boys; and I seldom have known a *rough satirist* mend them. But I will allow that you have done some good in that way, though not half so much as *Addison* did in his. And now you are *here*, if Pluto and Proserpine would take my advice, they should dispose of you both in this manner.—When any hero comes hither from earth who wants to be humbled, (as most heroes do) they should set *Swift* upon him to bring him down. The same good office he may frequently do to a saint swollen too much with the wind of spiritual pride; or to a philosopher vain of his wisdom and virtue. He will soon show the first that he cannot be holy without being humble; and the last, that with all his boasted morality, he is but a better kind of *Yahoo*. I would also have him apply his *antecosome*.

tic wash to the painted face of female vanity, and his rod, which draws blood at every stroke, to the hard back of insolent folly, or petulant wit. But you, Mr *Addison*, should be employed to comfort and raise the spirits of those whose good and noble souls are dejected with a sense of some infirmities in their nature. To them you should hold your fair and charitable Mirrour, which would bring to their sight all their hidden perfections, cast over the rest a softening shade, and put them in a temper fit for Elysium.—Adieu: I must now return to my business above.

DIALOGUE V.

ULYSSES. CIRCE.

In Circe's Island *.

CIRCE.

YOU will go, then, *Ulysses*? but why will you go? I desire you to speak the thoughts of your heart. Speak without reserve.—What carries you from me?

ULYSSES.

Pardon, Goddess, the weakness of human nature. My heart will sigh for my Country. It is a tenderness which all my attachment to you cannot overcome.

CIRCE.

This is not all, I perceive you are a-

* This can't be properly called a *Dialogue of the Dead*; but there is one of the same kind among Cambray's *Dialogues*, between *Ulysses* and his companion Grillus, when turned to a Boar by the enchantments of *Circe*, and two or three others, supposed to have past between persons alive.

fraid to declare your whole mind: but what do you fear? My terrors are gone. The proudest goddess on earth, when she has favoured a mortal as I have favoured you, has laid her divinity and power at his feet.

ULYSSES.

It may be so, while there still remains in her heart the fondness of love, or in her mind the fear of shame. But you, *Circe*, are above those vulgar sensations.

CIRCE.

I understand your caution; it belongs to your character; and therefore, to take all diffidence from you, I swear by Styx I will do no harm to you or your friends, for any thing which you say, though it should offend me ever so much; but will send you away with all marks of my friendship. Tell me now truly, what pleasures you hope to enjoy in the barren Island of Ithaca, which can compensate for those you leave in this paradise, exempt from all cares, and overflowing with all delights?

ULYSSES.

The pleasures of Virtue; the supreme happiness of doing good. Here I do no-

thing. My mind is in a palsy. Its faculties are benumbed. I long to return into action again, that I may employ those talents and virtues which I have cultivated from the earliest days of my youth. Toils and cares fright not me. They are the exercise of my soul; they keep it in health and in vigour. Give me again the fields of Troy, rather than these vacant groves. There I could reap the bright harvest of glory; here I am hid from the eyes of mankind, and begin to appear contemptible in my own. The Image of *my former self* haunts, and seems to upbraid me wherever I go. I meet it under the gloom of every shade: it even intrudes itself into your presence, and chides me from your arms. O Goddess! unless you have power to lay that troublesome spirit, unless you can make me forget myself, I cannot be happy here. I shall every day be more wretched.

CIRCE.

May not a wise and good man, who has spent all his youth in active life and honourable danger, when he begins to decline, have leave to retire, and enjoy the rest of his days in quiet and pleasure?

ULYSSES.

No retreat can be honourable to a wife and good man, but in company with the Muses. I am deprived of that sacred society here. The Muses will not inhabit the abodes of voluptuousness and sensual pleasure. How can I study, how can I think, while so many beasts (and the worst beasts I know are men turned into beasts) are howling, or roaring, or grunting about me?

CIRCE.

There is something in this; but this is not all. You suppress the strongest reason that draws you to Ithaca. There is another image, besides that of *your former self*, which appears to you in all parts of this Island; which follows your walks; which interposes itself between you and me, and chides you from my arms. It is Penelope, *Ulysses*; I know it is. Don't pretend to deny it. You sigh for her in my bosom itself.—And yet she is not an immortal. She is not, as I am, endowed with the gift of unfading youth. Several years have past since her's has been faded. I think, without vanity, that she was never so handsome as I. But what is she now?

ULYSSES.

You have told me yourself, in a former conversation, when I inquired of you about her, that she is true to my bed, and as for d of me now, after twenty years absence, as when I left her to go to Troy. I left her in the bloom of her youth and her beauty. How much must her constancy have been tried since that time! How meritorious is her fidelity! Shall I reward her with falsehood? Shall I forget her who can't forget me; who has nothing so dear to her as my remembrance?

CIRCE.

Her love is preserved by the continual hope of your speedy return. Take that hope from her; let your companions return, and let her know that you have fixed your abode here with me, that you have fixed it for ever; let her know that she is free to dispose of her heart and her hand as she pleases; send my picture to her; bid her compare it with her own face: if all this does not cure her of the remains of her passion, if you don't hear of her marrying Eurymachus in a twelvemonth, I understand nothing of womankind.

ULYSSES.

O cruel Goddess! why will you force me to tell you those truths I wish to conceal? If by such unjust, such barbarous, usage I could lose her heart, it would break mine. How should I endure the torment of thinking that I had wronged such a wife? What could make me amends for her not being mine, for her being another's? Don't frown, *Circe*; I own (since you will have me speak) I own *You* could not.— With all your pride of immortal beauty, with all your magical charms to assist those of Nature, you are not such a powerful charmer as she. You feel *desire*, and you give it: but you never felt *love*, nor can you inspire it. How can I love one who would have degraded me into a beast? Penelope raised me into a hero. Her love ennobled, invigorated, exalted my mind. She bid me go to the Siege of Troy, though the parting with me was worse than death to herself. She bid me expose myself there to all perils among the foremost heroes of Greece, though her poor heart trembled to think of the least I should meet, and would have given all its own blood to save a drop of mine. Then there was such a conformity in all our inclinations! When

Minerva taught me the lessons of wisdom, she loved to be present; she heard, she retained the moral instructions, the sublime truths of Nature: she gave them back to me softened and sweetened with the peculiar graces of her own mind. When we unbent our thoughts with the charms of Poetry, when we read together the Poems of Orpheus, Musæus, and Linus, with what taste did she mark every excellence in them! My feelings were dull compared to her's. She seemed herself to be the Muse who had inspired those verses, and had tuned their lyres to infuse into the hearts of mankind the love of wisdom and virtue, and the fear of the gods. How beneficent was she, how good to my people! What care did she take to instruct them in the finer and more elegant arts; to relieve the necessities of the sick and the aged; to superintend the education of children; to do my subjects every good office of kind intercession; to lay before me their wants, to assist their petitions; to mediate for those who were objects of mercy, to sue for those who deserved the favours of the crown. And shall I banish myself for ever from such a consort? Shall I give up her society for the brutal joys of a sensual life, keeping indeed the form of a man, but having lost

the human soul, or at least all its noble and godlike powers? Oh *Circe*, forgive me; I can't bear the thought.

CIRCE.

Be gone — don't imagine I ask you to stay. *The Daughter of the Sun* is not so mean-spirited as to solicit a mortal to share her happiness with her. It is a happiness which I find you cannot enjoy. I pity you and despise you. That which you seem to value so much I have no notion of. All you have said seems to me a jargon of sentiments fitter for a silly woman than for a great man. Go, read, and spin too, if you please, with your wife. I forbid you to remain another day in my Island. You shall have a fair wind to carry you from it. After that, may every storm that Neptune can raise pursue and overwhelm you. Be gone, I say; quit my sight.

ULYSSES.

Great Goddess, I obey — but remember your oath. —

DIALOGUE VI.

MERCURY.

An English DUELLIST.*A North-American* SAVAGE.*The* DUELLIST.

MERCURY, Charon's Boat is on the other side of the water : allow me, before it returns, to have some conversation with the *North-American Savage* whom you brought hither at the same time as you conducted me to the Shades. I never saw one of that *species* before, and am curious to know what the animal is. He looks very grim.—Pray, Sir, what is your name? I understand you speak English.

SAVAGE.

Yes, I learnt it in my childhood, having been bred for some years in the town of New York. But, before I was a man, I returned to my countrymen, the valiant *Mohawks* ; and being cheated by one of your's in the sale of some rum, I never cared to have any thing to do with them afterwards. Yet I took up the hatchet for

them, with the rest of my Tribe, in the war against France, and was killed while I was out upon a scalping party. But I died very well satisfied: for my friends were victorious, and before I was shot I had scalped seven men and five women and children. In a former war I had done still greater exploits. My name is *The Bloody Bear*: it was given me to express my fierceness and valour.

DUELLIST.

Bloody Bear, I respect you, and am much your humble servant. My name is *Tom Pushwell*, very well known at Arthur's. I am a gentleman by my birth, and by profession a gamester and man of honour. I have killed men in fair fighting, in honourable single combat, but don't understand cutting the throats of women and children.

SAVAGE.

Sir, that is our way of making war. Every nation has its own customs. But by the grimness of your countenance, and that hole in your breast, I presume you were killed, as I was myself, in some scalping party. How happened it that your enemy did not take off your scalp?

DUELLIST.

Sir, I was killed in a duel. A friend of mine had lent me some money. After two or three years, being in great want himself, he asked me to pay him. I thought his demand an affront to my honour, and sent him a challenge. We met in Hyde-Park. The fellow could not fence: I was the adroiteſt ſwordſman in England. I gave him three or four wounds, but at laſt he run upon me with ſuch impetuofity, that he put me out of my play, and I could not prevent him from whipping me through the lungs. I died the next day, as a man of honour ſhould, without any ſnivelling ſigns of repentance: and he will follow me ſoon, for his ſurgeon has declared his wounds to be mortal. It is ſaid that his wife is dead of her fright, and that his family of ſeven children will be undone by his death. So I am well revenged, and that is a comfort. For my part, I had no wife. —I always hated marriage: my whore will take good care of herſelf, and my children are provided for at the Foundling Hoſpital.

SAVAGE.

Mercury, I won't go in a boat with that

fellow. He has murdered his countryman : he has murdered his friend : I say, I won't go in a boat with that fellow. I will swim over the river : I can swim like a duck.

MERCURY.

Swim over the Styx ! it must not be done ; it is against the laws of Pluto's empire. You must go in the Boat, and be quiet.

SAVAGE.

Don't tell me of laws : I am a Savage : I value no laws. Talk of laws to the Englishman : there are laws in his country, and yet you see he did not regard them : for they could never allow him to kill his fellow-subject, in time of peace, because he asked him to pay a debt. I know that the English are a *barbarous nation* ; but they can't be so brutal as to make such things lawful.

MERCURY.

You reason well against him. But how comes it that you are so offended with murder ? you, who have massacred women in their sleep, and children in the cradle ?

SAVAGE.

I killed none but my enemies : I never killed my own countrymen : I never killed my friend. — Here, take my blanket, and let it come over in the Boat ; but see that the murderer does not sit upon it, or touch it. If he does, I will burn it in the fire I see yonder. Farewell.— I am resolved to to swim over the water.

MERCURY.

By this touch of my wand I take all thy strength from thee.—Swim now, if thou canst.

SAVAGE.

This is a very potent Enchanter.— Restore me my strength, and I will obey thee.

MERCURY.

I restore it ; but be orderly, and do as I bid you ; otherwise worse will befall you.

DUELLIST.

Mercury, leave him to me: I'll tutor him for you. Sirrah *Savage*, dost thou pretend to be ashamed of my company ! Dost thou know that I have kept the best company in England ?

SAVAGE.

I know thou art a scoundrel.—Not pay thy debts ! kill thy friend who lent thee money, for asking thee for it ! Get out of my sight. I will drive thee into Styx.

MERCURY.

Stop—I command thee. No violence.
—Talk to him calmly.

SAVAGE.

I must obey thee.—Well, Sir, let me know what merit you had, to introduce you into good company ? What could you do.

DUELLIST.

Sir, I gamed, as I told you.—Besides, I kept a good table.—I *eat* as well as any man in England or France.

SAVAGE.

Eat ! did you ever eat the chine of a Frenchman, or his leg, or his shoulder ! There is *fine eating* ! I have eat twenty.—My table was always *well served*. My wife was the best cook for the dressing of man's flesh in all North-America. You will not pretend to compare your *eating* with mine ?

DUELLIST.

I danced very finely.

SAVAGE.

I'll dance with thee for thy ears.—I can dance all day long. I can dance the *War-Dance* with more spirit and vigour than any man of my nation. Let us see thee begin it. How thou standest like a post! Has Mercury struck thee with his enfeebling rod? or art thou ashamed to let us see how awkward thou art? If he would permit me, I would teach thee to dance in a way that thou hast not yet learnt. I'd make thee caper and leap like a buck. But what else canst thou do, thou bragging *rascal*?

DUELLIST.

O Heavens! must I bear this! What can I do with this fellow? I have neither sword nor pistol; and his shade seems to be twice as strong as mine.

MERCURY.

You must answer his questions. It was your own desire to have a conversation with him. He is not well bred; but he will tell you some truths which you must

hear in this place. It would have been well for you if you had heard them *above*. He asked you what you could do besides eating and dancing.

DUELLIST.

I sung very agreeably.

SAVAGE.

Let me hear you sing your *Death Song*, or the *War Whoop*. I challenge you to sing.—The fellow is mute.—Mercury, this is a *liar*.—He tells us nothing but *lies*. Let me pull out his tongue.

DUELLIST.

The lie given me!—and alas! I dare not resent it. Oh what a disgrace to the family of the *Pushwells*! This, indeed, is *Damnation*.

MERCURY.

Here, Charon, take these two savages to your care. How far the barbarism of the Mohawk will excuse his horrid acts I leave Minos to judge: but the Englishman, what excuse can he plead? The custom of duelling? A bad excuse at the best! but in his case it cannot avail. The spirit that made him draw his sword in this combat

against his friend is not that of *Honour*; it is the spirit of the Furies, of Alecto herself. To her he must go, for she hath long dwelt in his merciless bosom.

SAVAGE.

If he is to be punished, turn him over to me. I understand the art of tormenting. Sirrah, I begin with this *kick on your breech*. Get you into the Boat, or I'll give you another. I am impatient to have you condemned.

DUELLIST.

Oh my honour, my honour! to what infamy art thou fallen!

DIALOGUE VII.

PLINY THE ELDER.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

PLINY *the* ELDER.

THE account that you give me *, nephew, of your behaviour amidst the terrors and perils that accompanied the first eruption of Vesuvius, does not please me much : there was more of vanity in it than true magnanimity. Nothing is great that is unnatural and affected. When the earth shook beneath you, when the heavens were obscured with sulphureous clouds full of ashes and cinders thrown up from the bowels of the new-formed volcano, when all Nature seemed on the brink of destruction, to be *reading Livy*, and *making Extracts*, as if all had been safe and quiet about you, was an absurd affectation. To meet danger with courage is the part of a man ; but to be insensible of it is brutal stupidity ; and to pretend insensibility,

* V. C. Plinii Epist. l. vi. Ep. 20.

where it cannot exist, is ridiculous falseness. When you afterwards refused to leave your aged mother, and save yourself without her by flight, you indeed acted nobly. It was also becoming a Roman to keep up her spirits amidst all the horrors of that dreadful scene, by shewing yourself undismayed and courageous. But the merit and glory of this part of your conduct is sunk by the other, which gives an air of ostentation and vanity to the whole.

PLINY *the* YOUNGER.

That vulgar minds should suppose my attention to my studies in such a conjuncture unnatural and affected, I should not much wonder; but that you would blame it as such, I did not expect; you who approached still nearer than I to the fiery storm, and died by the suffocating heat of the vapour.

PLINY *the* ELDER.

I died, as a good and brave man ought to die, in doing my duty *. Let me recall to your memory all the particulars, and then you shall judge yourself on the disse-

* V. Epist. xvi. l. 6.

rence of your conduct and mine. I was the Prefect of the Roman fleet which then lay at Misenum. Upon the first account I received of the very unusual cloud that appeared in the air, I ordered a vessel to carry me out to some distance from the shore, that I might the better observe the phenomenon, and try to discover its nature and cause. This I did as a philosopher, and it was a curiosity proper and natural to a searching, inquisitive mind. I offered to take you with me, and surely you should have desired to go; for *Livy* might have been read at any other time, and such spectacles are not frequent; but you remained fixed and chained down to your book with a pedantic attachment. When I came out from my house, I found all the people forsaking their dwellings, and flying to the sea as the safest retreat. To assist them and all others who dwelt on the coast, I immediately ordered the fleet to put out, and sailed with it round the whole bay of Naples, steering particularly to those parts of the shore where the danger was greatest, and from whence the inhabitants were endeavouring to escape with the most trepidation. Thus I spent the whole day, and preserved by my care some thousands of lives; noting at the same time, with a

steady composure and freedom of mind, the several forms and phenomena of the eruption. Towards night, as we approached to the foot of Vesuvius, all the gallies were covered with ashes and embers, which grew hotter and hotter; then showers of pumice stones and burnt and broken *Pyrites* began to fall on our heads; and we were stopt by the obstacles which the ruins of the mountain had suddenly formed, by falling into the sea, and almost filling it up on that part of the coast. I then commanded my pilot to steer to the villa of my friend Pomponianus, which, you know, was situated in the inmost recess of the bay. The wind was very favourable to carry me thither, but would not allow him to put off from the shore, as he wished to have done. We were therefore constrained to pass the night in his house. They watched, and I slept; till the heaps of pumice stones which fell from the clouds, that had now been impelled to that side of the bay, rose so high in the area of the apartment I lay in, that I could not have got out had I staid any longer, and the earthquakes were so violent, as to threaten every moment the fall of the house. We therefore thought it more safe to go into the open air, guard-

ing our heads as well as we could with pillows tied upon them. The wind continuing adverse, and the sea very rough, we remained on the shore till a sulphureous and fiery vapour oppressed my weak lungs, and ended my life. — In all this I hope that I acted as the duty of my station required, and with true magnanimity. But on this occasion, and in many other parts of your life, I must say, my dear nephew, that there was a vanity mixed with your virtue which hurt and disgraced it. Without that you would have been one of the worthiest men that Rome has produced; for none ever excelled you in the integrity of your heart and greatness of your sentiments. Why would you lose the substance of glory by seeking the shadow?—Your eloquence had the same fault as your manners: it was too *affected*. You professed to make Cicero your guide and your pattern; but when one reads his *Panegyric* upon Julius Cæsar, in his oration for Marcellus, and your's upon Trajan, the first seems the language of Nature and Truth, raised and dignified with all the majesty of the most sublime eloquence: the latter appears the studied harangue of a florid *Rhetorician*, more desirous to *shine*,

and to set off his own wit, than to extol the great man he was praising.

PLINY *the* YOUNGER.

I have too high a respect for you, uncle, to question your judgment either of my life or my writings. They might both have been better, if I had not been too solicitous to render them perfect. But it is not for me to say much on that subject. Permit me, therefore, to return to the subject on which we began our conversation. What a direful calamity was the eruption of Vesuvius, which you have now been describing? Don't you remember the beauty of that charming coast, and of the mountain itself, before it was broken and torn with the violence of those sudden fires that forced their way through it, and carried desolation and ruin over all the neighbouring country? The foot of it was covered with corn fields and rich meadows, interspersed with fine villas, and magnificent towns: the sides of it were cloathed with the best vines in Italy, producing the richest and noblest wines. How quick, how unexpected, how dreadful the change! All was at once overwhelmed with ashes, and cinders, and fiery torrents, pre-

senting to the eye the most dismal scene of horror and destruction !

PLINY *the* ELDER.

You paint it very truly.—But has it never occurred to your mind that this change is an emblem of that which must happen to every rich, luxurious state. While the inhabitants of it are sunk in voluptuousness, while all is smiling around them, and they think that no evil, no danger is nigh, the seeds of destruction are fermenting within ; and, breaking out on a sudden, lay waste all their opulence, all their delights ; till they are left a sad monument of Divine wrath, and of the fatal effects of internal corruption.

DIALOGUE VIII.

FERNANDO CORTEZ, WILLIAM PENN.

CORTEZ.

IS it possible, *William Penn*, that you should compare your glory with mine! The planter of a small colony in North America presume to vie with the great conqueror of the Mexican empire!

PENN.

Friend, I pretend to no glory—the LORD preserve me from it.—All glory is *his*; —but this I say, that I was *his instrument* in a more glorious work than that done by thee; incomparably more glorious.

CORTEZ.

Dost thou not know, *William Penn*, that with less than six hundred Spanish foot, eighteen horse, and a few small pieces of cannon, I fought and defeated innumerable armies of very brave men, dethroned an emperor who had been raised to the

throne by his valour, and excelled all his countrymen in the science of war, as much as they excelled all the rest of the West-Indian nations? that I made him my prisoner in his own capital; and, after he had been deposed by his subjects, vanquished and took Guatimozin, his successor, and accomplished my conquest of the whole Empire, which I annexed to the Spanish crown? Dost thou not know, that, in doing these wonderful acts, I showed as much courage as Alexander the Great, as much prudence as Cæsar? That by my policy I ranged under my banners the powerful commonwealth of Tlascala, and brought them to serve me in subduing the Mexicans, though with the loss of their own independence? and that, to crown my glory, when the Governor of Cuba, Velasquez, would have taken my command from me, and sacrificed me to his envy and jealousy, I drew from him his troops, and joined them to my own, showing myself as superior to all other Spaniards as I was to the Indians?

PENN.

I know that thou wast as fierce as a lion, and as subtle as a serpent. The devil, perhaps, may place thee as high *in his*

black list of heros as Alexander or Cæsar. It is not my business to interfere with him in settling thy rank. But hark thee, friend *Cortez*——What right hadst thou, or the King of Spain himself, to the Mexican empire? Answer me that.

CORTEZ.

The Pope gave it to my Master.

PENN.

The devil offered to give our LORD all the kingdoms of the earth, and I suppose the Pope, as *his Vicar*, gave thy master this; in return for which he *fell down and worshipped him*, like an Idolater as he was. But suppose the high priest of Mexico had taken it into his head to give Spain to Montezuma, would his right have been good?

CORTEZ.

These are questions of casuistry, which it is not the business of a foldier to decide; we leave that to gownsmen. But pray, Mr *Penn*, what right had you to the Province you settled!

PENN.

An honest right of fair purchase. We gave the Indians some things which they

wanted from us, and they gave us lands which they did not want. All was amicably agreed on, not a drop of blood shed to stain our acquisition.

CORTEZ.

I am afraid there was a little *fraud* in the purchase. Thy followers, *William Penn*, are said to think cheating, in a quiet and sober way, no mortal sin.

PENN.

The saints are always calumniated by the ungodly. But it was a sight for an angel to behold with delight, to see the Colony which I settled ! To see us living among the Indians like innocent lambs, not devouring them like ravenous wolves, as thou didst, and thy bloody companions ! To see the whole country, that was before a wild desert, made as fertile and fair as the Garden of God ! O *Fernando Cortez* ! *Fernando Cortez* ! Didst thou leave Mexico in that state ? No, thou hadst turned that fertile and populous region into a desert, a desert flooded with blood. Dost thou remember that horrid scene, when the noble Emperor Guatimozin was stretched by thy soldiers on hot burning coals, to make him discover into what part of the Mexi-

can Lake he had thrown the royal treasures? Are not his groans ever sounding in the ears of thy conscience? Do not they rend thy hard heart, and strike thee with more horror than the yells of the Furies?

CORTEZ.

Alas! I was not present when that dire act was done. Had I been there, I would have forbidden it. My nature was mild.

PENN.

Thou wast the captain of that band of robbers who did this horrid deed. Thou didst enable them to commit it by the advantage they drew from thy counsels and conduct. And thy skill saved them afterwards from the vengeance that was due to so enormous a crime. The enraged Mexicans would have properly punished them for it, if they had not had thee for their general, thou *Lieutenant of Satan*.

CORTEZ

The *saints*, I find, can *rail*, *William Penn*. But how do you hope to preserve this fine Colony which you have settled? If the Indians should always continue at peace with your successors there, the French

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will not. Are the inhabitants of Pennsylvania to make war against *them* with prayers and with preaching? if so, that Garden of God which you say you have planted, will soon be their prey, and they will take from you your property, laws, and religion.

PENN.

The LORD's will be done. The LORD will defend us, if it be his good pleasure.

CORTEZ.

Is this the wisdom of a great legislator! I have heard some of your countrymen compare you to Solon! Did Solon, think you, give laws to a people, and leave those laws and that people exposed to the mercy of every invader? The first business of legislature is to provide a military strength that may secure the whole fabric and system from ruin. If a house is built in a land of robbers, without a gate, or a bolt, or a bar to defend it from their attempts, what matters it how well-proportioned, or how commodious the architecture of it may be? Is it richly furnished within? the more it will tempt the robbers to come and plunder its wealth. The world, *William Penn*, is all a land of robbers. Any

state or commonwealth erected therein must be well fenced and secured by good military institutions ; or the finer, the wiser, the happier it is in all other respects, the greater will be its danger, the more sure its destruction. Perhaps the neighbouring English colonies may for a while protect your's from the Indians and French ; but that precarious security cannot always preserve you. Your plan of government must be changed, or your Colony will be lost.

PENN.

* These are suggestions of human wisdom. The doctrines I held were *inspired* ; they came from *above*.

CORTEZ.

It is blasphemy to say, *that any folly could come from the Fountain of Wisdom*. Whatever is inconsistent with the great laws of Nature, and with the necessary state of human society, cannot be inspired by the Divinity. Self-defence is as necessary to nations as men ; and shall particulars have a right, which nations have not ? True religion, *William Penn*, is the perfection of reason. Fanaticism is the disgrace, the destruction of reason.

PENN.

Though what thou sayest should be true, it does not come well from thy unhallowed mouth. A *Papist* talk of *reason*! Go to the Inquisition, and tell them of reason and *the great Laws of Nature*. They will broil thee, as thy soldiers broiled the unhappy Guatimozin. Why dost thou turn pale? Is it the name of the Inquisition, or the name of Guatimozin that troubles thy soul? O wretched man! who wast an instrument to carry into so vast a part of America that hellish tribunal. Tremble and shake when thou thinkest that every murder which they have committed, every torture they have inflicted on the innocent Indians is owing to thee. Thou must answer to God for all their inhumanity, all their injustice. What wouldst thou give to part with the renown of thy wars and thy conquests, and to have a conscience as pure and unsullied as mine?

CORTEZ.

I feel the force of thy words. They pierce me like daggers. I can never, never, be happy, while I remember the ills I have caused. — Yet I thought I did right. I thought I laboured to advance the

glory of God, and propagate in the remotest parts of the earth his holy religion. He will be merciful to well designing and pious error. Thou, too, wilt have need of that gracious indulgence ; though not, I own, so much as I.

PENN.

Ask thy heart, whether ambition was not thy real motive, and zeal the pretence ?

CORTEZ.

Ask thine whether thy zeal had no worldly views, and whether thou didst believe all the nonsense of the sect thou wast pleased to espouse. *Adieu.*—Self-examination requires retirement.

DIALOGUE IX.

MARCUS PORTIUS CATO.
MESSALLA CORVINUS.

CATO.

OH *Messalla*!—is it then possible that what some of our countrymen tell me should be true? is it possible that you could live the courtier of Octavius, that you could accept of employments and honours from him, from the tyrant of your country; you, the brave, the noble-minded, the virtuous *Messalla*; you, whom, I remember, my son-in-law Brutus has often extolled as the most promising youth in Rome, tutored by Philosophy, trained up in arms, scorning all those soft pleasures that reconcile men to an easy and indolent servitude, fit for the roughest tasks of honour and virtue, fit to live or to die a freeman?

MESSALLA.

Cato, I revere both your life and your death: but the last, I am sure, did no good to your country, and the former would

have done more, if you could have mitigated a little the sternness of your virtue; I will not say of your pride. For my own part, I adhered with constant integrity to the Republic, while she existed. I fought for her at Philippi, under the only commander who, if he had conquered, would have conquered for her, not for himself. When he was dead, I saw nothing remained to my Country but the choice of a master. I chose the best.

CATO.

The best ! — What, a man who had broken all laws, who had violated all trusts, who had led the armies of the Commonwealth against Antony, and then joined with him and that sottish traitor Lepidus to set up a triumvirate more execrable by far than either of the former; shed the best blood in Rome by inhuman proscriptions; murdered even his own guardian; murdered Cicero, to whose confidence, too weakly given, he owed all his power ! Was this the man you chose for your master ? Could you bring your tongue to give him the name of *Augustus* ? Could you stoop to beg consulships and triumphs from him ? Oh shame to virtue ! O degeneracy of Rome ! To what infamy are

her sons, her noblest sons, fallen ! The thought of it pains me more than the wound that I died of: it stabs my soul.

MESSALLA.

Moderate, *Cato*, the vehemence of your indignation. There has always been too much passion mixed with our virtue. The enthusiasm you are possessed with is of the most noble kind ; but it disturbs and blinds your judgement. Hear me with patience, and with the tranquillity that becomes a philosopher. It is true that Octavius had done all you say ; but it is no less true that he was the best master Rome could then chuse. His mind was fitted by Nature for empire. His understanding was clear, strong, serene. His passions were cool and under the absolute command of his reason. His very ambition was *rational*, tho' it appeared to be boundless. His name and birth gave him an authority over the troops and over the people, which no other could have in an equal degree. He used that authority to check and restrain the excesses of both, which it was no longer in the power of the senate to repress, nor of any other general, or magistrate in the state. He restored discipline in our armies, the first means of salvation, without which

no legal government could have been formed or supported. He avoided all odious and invidious names. He maintained and respected those which time and long habits had endeared to the Roman people. He permitted a generous freedom of speech. He treated the nobles of Pompey's party as well as those of his father's, if they did not themselves keep up the distinction. He healed all the wounds of our Civil dissensions. He formed a plan of government, moderate, decent, which left the senate its majesty, and some of its power. He restored vigour and spirit to the laws; he made new and good ones for the reformation of manners; he enforced their execution; he governed the empire with lenity, justice and glory; he humbled the pride of the Parthians; he broke the fierceness of the barbarous nations; he gave to his Country, exhausted and languishing with the great loss of blood that she had sustained in the course of so many Civil wars, the blessing of peace; a blessing which was become so necessary for her, that she could have enjoyed no other without it. In doing these things he had my assistance. I am not ashamed to own that he had. I am prouder of it, and I think I can much better justify myself to my

country, than if I had died by my own hand at Philippi. Believe me, *Cato*, it is better *to do some Good* than to *project a great deal*. A little practicable virtue is of more use to society than the most sublime theory, or the best principles of government ill applied.

CATO.

Yet I must think it was beneath you to join in supporting a government, which, though coloured and mitigated, was a tyranny still. Had you not better have gone into a voluntary exile, where you would not have seen the face of the tyrant, and where you might have practised those private virtues, which are all that the Gods require from good men in certain situations?

MESSALLA.

No:—I did much more good by staying at Rome. Had Augustus required of me anything base, anything servile, I would have gone into exile, I would have died, rather than do it.—But he asked no such thing. He respected my virtue, he respected my dignity, he used me as well as Agrippa, or as Mæcenas, with this distinction alone, that he never employed my

sword but against foreign nations, or the old enemies of the Republic.

CATO.

It must, I own, have been a pleasure to be employed against Antony, that monster of vice, who plotted the ruin of Liberty, and the raising of himself to sovereign power, amidst the riot of Bacchanals, and in the embraces of harlots: who, when he had attained to that power, delivered it up to a lascivious queen, and would have made an Egyptian strumpet the mistress of Rome, if the battle of Actium had not preserved us from *that last of misfortunes*.

MESSALLA.

In that battle I had a considerable share. So I had in encouraging the liberal arts, which Augustus protected. Under his patronage the Muses made Rome their capital seat. It would have pleased you to have known Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Ovid, Livy, and many more, whose names will be illustrious to all generations.

CATO.

I understand you, *Messalla*. Your Augustus and you made Rome a Greek city, an academy of fine wits, another Athens

under the government of Demetrius Phalareus. I had much rather have seen her under Fabricius and Curius, and her other honest old Consuls who could not read.

MESSALLA.

Yet to these writers she will owe as much of her glory as she did to those heroes. I could say more, a great deal more, on the happiness of the government of Augustus. I might even add, and with some weight of reason, that the vast extent of the empire, the factions of the nobility, and the corruption of the people, which no laws under the ordinary magistrates of the state were able to restrain, seemed to require some change in the government: that *Cato* himself, had he been upon earth, could have done us no good, unless he would have yielded to become *our Prince*. But I see you consider me as a deserter from the Republic, and an apologist for a tyrant. I therefore leave you to your own meditations.

DIALOGUE X.

CHRISTINA, *Queen of Sweden.*
Chancellor OXENSTIERN.

CHRISTINA.

YOU seem to avoid me, *Oxenstiern*; and now we are met, you don't pay me the reverence due to your Queen! Have you forgotten that I was your sovereign?

OXENSTIERN.

I am not your subject here, Madam; but you have forgotten that you yourself broke that bond, and freed me from my allegiance many years before you died, by abdicating the crown, against my advice, and the will of your people. Reverence here is paid only to virtue.

CHRISTINA.

I see you have a mind to mortify me for acting against your advice: but my fame does not depend upon your judgment. All Europe admired the greatness of my mind in resigning a crown, to dedicate

myself to the love of the Muses and the fine arts ; things of which you had no taste in barbarous Sweden, the realm of the Goths and Vandals.

OXENSTIERN.

There is scarce any mind *too great* for a crown ; but there are many *too little*. Are you sure, Madam, it was magnanimity that caused you to fly from the government of a kingdom which your ancestors, and particularly your heroic father, Gustavus, had ruled with such glory ?

CHRISTINA.

Am I sure of it ? Yes : — and to confirm my own judgment, I have that of many learned men and *beaux esprits* of all countries, who have celebrated my action as the perfection of heroism.

OXENSTIERN.

Those *beaux esprits* judged according to their favourite passion. I have heard young ladies admire Mark Antony for heroically leaving his fleet at the battle of Actium to follow his mistress, and losing the world for a woman. Your passion for literature had much the same effect upon you. But why did not you indulge it in

a way more becoming your birth and your rank? Why did not you bring the Muses to Sweden, instead of running from thence to seek them in Rome? For a prince to encourage and protect arts and sciences, and more especially to instruct an illiterate people, and inspire them with knowledge, fine taste, and politeness, is an act of true greatness.

CHRISTINA.

The Swedes were too gross to be refined by any culture which I could have given to their half-frozen souls. Wit and genius require the influence of a warmer and more southern climate.

OXENSTIERN.

The Swedes too gross? No, Madam; not even the Russians are too gross to be refined, if they had a great prince at their head to instruct them. The Swedes have sharp wits, as keen as their climate. They want nothing but peace and good masters to form them: if once they have those, they will make as great a figure in science as arms.

CHRISTINA.

It was too tedious a work for the viva-

city of my temper to polish bears into men: I should have died of the spleen before I had made any proficiency in it. My desire was to shine among those who were able to judge of my talents. At Paris, at Rome, I had the glory of showing the French and Italian wits that the North could produce *one* not inferior to them. They saw me with wonder. The homage I had received in my court at Stockholm was paid to my *dignity*: that which I drew from the French and Roman academies was paid to my *talents*. How much more glorious, how much more delightful, was that homage than the other! Could you have felt the joy of my heart, when I saw the greatest authors, in the most learned and civilized countries of Europe, bringing their works to me, and submitting the merit of them to my decisions; when I saw the philosophers, the historians, the poets, the rhetoricians, the painters, the sculptors, making my judgment the measure of their reputation; you would not wonder that I preferred the empire of Wit to all other empire, but especially to the contracted dominions of Sweden.

OXENSTIERN.

O Great Gustavus! my ever honoured,
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my adored master ! O greatest of kings ! greatest in valour, in virtue, in wisdom, with what indignation must thy noble soul have looked down from that heaven where thou art enthroned, on thy unworthy, degenerate daughter ! With what shame must thou have seen her rambling about from court to court, deprived of her royal dignity, debased into a pedant, a witling, a smatterer in sculpture and painting, reduced to beg or buy flattery from each needy poet, or hireling rhetorician ! My heart bleeds when I think of this infamy, this soul stain to thy royal blood, illustrious Prince ! and yet—would to God ! would to God ! this was all the pollution it suffered !

CHRISTINA.

Darest thou, *Oxenstiern*, darest thou impute any blemish to my honour ? I think thou hast not the insolence even to hint to me the affront of such a suspicion.

OXENSTIERN.

Madam, the world scarce respects the frailties of queens when they are on their thrones, much less when they have thought fit to level themselves to the rank of the vulgar : and if their fame has suffered un-

justly by scandalous tongues, the way to clear it is not by an *assassination*.

CHRISTINA.

Oh ! that I were alive again and restored to my throne, that I might punish the audaciousness of this hoary traitor !—But, see ! he leaves me, he turns his back on me with cool contempt !—Alas ! do I not deserve that contempt ? in spite of myself I must own that I do.——O Vanity ! how short-lived are the pleasures thou givest ? I was thy votary : thou wast the God for whom I changed my religion ; for thee I forsook my country, my throne. What hast thou paid me back for the sacrifices I made thee ? Some puffs of incense from authors, who either thought their flattery due to the rank I had held, or hoped to advance themselves by my recommendation, or, at best, over-rated my passion for literature, and praised me, to raise the value of talents in which they excelled. But in the thoughts of *wise Men* I stand very low ; and their thoughts *alone* are the *true measure of Glory*. Nothing, I find can give the mind lasting joy, or self-approbation, but the consciousness of having performed our duty well in that station which it has pleased the Divine

Providence to assign to us. The glory of virtue is solid and eternal : all other fame must fade away soon, like a thin painted cloud, on which the casual glance of some faint beams of light has imprinted their weak and transient colours.

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DIALOGUE XI.

TITUS VESPASIANUS.
 CORNELIUS SCIPIO AFRICANUS.

TITUS.

NO — *Scipio* : I can't give place to you in this. — In other respects I acknowledge myself your inferior, though I was emperor of Rome, and you only her consul. I think your triumph over Carthage more glorious than mine over Judea : but in the triumph I gained over love I must feel myself superior to you, though your continence and generosity with regard to the fair Celtiberian, your captive, has been celebrated so highly.

SCIPIO.

Fame has been then unjust to your merit : for my action has made much more noise in the world, and been the favourite topic of eloquence in every age and every country.

TITUS.

It has:—— and in particular your great historian Livy has poured forth all the ornaments of his admirable rhetoric to embellish and dignify that part of your story. I had a great historian too, Cornelius Tacitus; but either from the brevity which he affected in his manner of writing, or from the severity of his nature, which, never having felt the passion of love, thought the subduing of it too easy a victory to deserve great encomiums, he has bestowed but three lines upon my parting with Berenicé, which cost me more pain, and greater efforts of mind, than all the toils of the Jewish war.

SCIPIO.

I wish to hear from yourself the history of that parting, and what made it so hard and painful to you.

TITUS.

While I served in Palestine under the auspices of my father Vespasian, I became acquainted with Berenicé, sister to King Agrippa, and who was herself a queen in those countries. She was the most beautiful woman in Asia; but she had graces

more charming still than her beauty. She had all the insinuation and wit of Cleopatra, without her coquetry. I loved her, and was beloved: she loved my person, not my greatness. Her tenderness, her fidelity, so inflamed my passion for her, and she seemed so worthy of my esteem, that I gave her a promise of marriage.

SCIPIO.

What do I hear? A Roman Senator promise to marry a queen!

TITUS.

I expected, *Scipio*, that your ears would be shocked with the sound of such an alliance. But consider that Rome in my time was very different from Rome in your's. The Republic was in reality changed to a monarchy. Our emperors had not indeed the title of King, but they had the power. The ferocious pride of our ancient republican senators had bent itself to the obsequious complaisance of a court. Why should I suppose that in this point alone it would continue inflexible? I flattered myself that the charms of *Berenicé*, and still more her virtues, would overcome an old prejudice, which seemed no longer

founded in reason, and dispose my country to approve, at least not condemn, the choice I had made. In this hope I continued, and so did Berenicé, till the death of my father. Upon that event the Roman empire, and (what she valued more) *my hand*, was due to her by my engagements.

SCIPIO.

The Roman empire due to a Syrian queen ! Oh Rome, how art thou fallen ! Accursed be the name of Octavius Cæsar, who by oppressing its liberty so lowered the majesty of the Republic, that such a thought could come into the mind of a brave and a virtuous Roman, nay, of one of the best of those emperors that have governed the Romans since the change of their constitution. But did you find the senate and people so servile, so lost to all sense of their honour and dignity, as to comply with your passion, and to affront the great Genius of Rome, and the eyes of her tutelary gods, the eyes of Jupiter Capitolinus, with the sight of a queen, an Asiatic queen, on the throne of the Cæsars ?

TITUS.

I did not;—they judged of it as you,

Scipio, judge; they abhorred, they disdained it. In vain did I urge to some of my friends, who represented to me the sense of the senate and people, that a *Messalina*, a *Poppæa*, dishonoured the throne of the *Cæsars* much more than a virtuous foreign princess. Their prejudices were unconquerable; I saw it was impossible for me to remove them. But I might have used my authority to silence their murmurs. A liberal donative to the soldiers, by whom I was loved with the fondest affection, would have secured to me their fidelity, and forced the senate and people to yield to my inclination. *Berenicé* knew this, and with floods of tears, more resistless still than her smiles, implored me not to sacrifice her happiness and my own to an unjust prepossession. Shall I own to you, *Africanus*? my heart not only pitied, but acknowledged the weight and the truth of her reasons. Yet so much did I abhor the idea of tyranny, so much respect did I pay to the sentiments of my subjects, that I determined to separate myself from her for ever, rather than force either the laws or the prejudices of *Rome* to yield to my will.

SCIPIO.

Give me thy hand, noble *Titus*. Thou wast worthy of the empire, and *Scipio Africanus* honours thy virtue.

TITUS.

My virtue can have no greater reward. But, O *Scipio*, think what my heart must have felt when I took that resolution, and when I communicated it to my dear, my unhappy *Berenicé*. You saw the struggle of *Masinissa*, when you forced him to give up his beloved *Sophonisba*. Mine was a harder conflict. She had abandoned him to marry the king of *Numidia*. He knew that her ruling passion was ambition, not love. He could not esteem her, when she quitted a husband whom she had ruined, who had lost his crown and his liberty in the cause of her country, and for her sake, to give her person to him, the capital foe of that wretched husband. He must, in spite of his passion, have thought her a false, detestable woman. But I esteemed *Berenicé*: she deserved my esteem. I knew she would not have accepted the empire from any other hand. Had I been a private man, she would have raised me to her bed and her throne. Yet I had the strength,

I almost could say, the *hardness* of heart, to tell her, I could not fulfil my engagement; to bid her depart from Rome, from my sight; depart for ever! What was your conquest over yourself in giving back to her betrothed lover the Celtiberian captive compared to this; Indeed *that* was no conquest. I will not dishonour the virtue of *Scipio* so much as to think that he felt any struggle with himself when he did it. A woman engaged to another, engaged by affection as well as by vows, let her have been ever so beautiful, could raise in your heart no sentiments but compassion and friendship. To have violated her would have been an act of brutality, which none but a Tarquin could have committed. To have detained her would have been cruel. But where love is mutual, where the object beloved suffers more in the parting than you do yourself to part with *her*, is a struggle indeed! It is the hardest sacrifice a good heart can make to its duty.

SCIPIO.

I acknowledge it is, and yield you the palm. But I will own to you, *Titus*, I never knew much of the tenderness you describe. Hannibal, Carthage, Rome, the saving of my country, the subduing of its

rival, these filled my thoughts, and left no room there for those softer passions. I liked women as amusements, but they never engaged my serious attention. I do not blame your sensibility: but, when I used to go to the Capitol *to talk with Jove*, I never consulted him about *love affairs*.

TITUS.

If ambition alone had governed my soul, as I believe it did your's, I might have been a greater, but I should not have been a more virtuous man, nor have deserved to be called *the delight of human kind*.

DIALOGUE XII.

HENRY, *Duke of GUISE.*
MACHIAVEL.

GUISE.

AVAUNT ! thou fiend—I abhor thy fight.— I look upon thee as the cause of my death, and of all the calamities brought upon the French nation, in the most cruel and bloody of all Civil wars.

MACHIAVEL.

I the cause of your death ! You surprise me !

GUISE.

Yes :—your pernicious Maxims of Policy. imported from Florence with Catherine of Medicis, your wicked disciple, produced in France such a government, such dissimulation, such perfidy, such violent, ruthless, and sanguinary counsels, as threw that whole kingdom into the utmost confusion, and ended my life with the swords of assassins.

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MACHIAVEL.

Whoever may have a right to complain of my Policy, you, Sir, have not. You owed your greatness to it, and your deviating from it was the cause of your death. Hear how I make out both these propositions. If it had not been for the assassination of Admiral Coligni and the massacre of the Huguenots, the strength and power which that party would have gained under the conduct of so able a chief, after the death of your father, its most dangerous enemy, would have been fatal to your greatness: nor could you, even with the advantage you drew from that *great stroke of royal policy*, have acquired the power you afterwards rose to in the kingdom of France, but by pursuing my Maxims; by availing yourself of the name of *Religion* to serve the dark purposes of your ambition; and by suffering no restraint of conscience or fear, not even the guilt of exciting a Civil war, to stop you in the way to dominion and glory. Thus far was well, and you followed my lessons like a great man. But here you failed by not rightly observing those lessons. On the day of the *Barricades* you suffered the king to escape out of Paris, of which you were master,

and when it was in your power to have slain or deposed him. This was against the great rule of my politics, not to stop short in Rebellion or Treason till the work is completed. And you were justly censured for it by Pope Sixtus Quintus, a wise politician, who said, you ought to have known, that when a subject draws his sword against his king he should throw away the scabbard. Your next fault was another deviation from my rules, by putting yourself in the power of a sovereign you had so much offended. Why would you, against all the cautions I gave, expose your life in the castle of Blois to the mercy of Henry? What mercy could you hope from him, but such as you found? Impute your death therefore, not to my Maxims, but to your own folly in acting against them.

GUISE.

If neither I, nor Charles the Ninth, nor Henry the Third, had ever practised your Maxims at all, they would have reigned with honour and peace, and I should have risen by my courage and talents to as much greatness as it befitted a subject to seek. But you led us on into those crooked paths out of which there was no retreat without danger, nor a possibility of

advancing without being execrable to all mankind : and *whoever is so, has all things to fear from that detestation.* I will give you a proof of this in the fate of a prince who ought to be your hero, because, of all men that ever lived, he acted most steadily according to the rules which you have laid down, and was a much greater man than Cæsar Borgia, on whose conduct you have bestowed such encomiums ; I mean Richard the Third, King of England. He stopped at no crime that could be of use to him. He was a dissembler, a hypocrite, a murderer in cool blood : he gained the crown by cutting off all that stood in his way without remorse or compassion : he trusted no body farther than helped his own ends, and was consistent with his own safety : he liberally rewarded all services done him, but would not let the remembrance of them atone for offences, or save any man who obstructed his views. Nevertheless, though his nature shrunk from no wickedness which could serve his ambition, he exercised in the highest degree all those virtues, both real and feigned, which you recommend to the practice of *your Prince.* He was courageous and prudent in war, in government just, strict in the execution of the laws, and most care-

ful, by an attentive and vigorous administration, to protect the people against any injuries or oppressions. In all his actions and words there appeared the highest concern for the honour of the nation. He was neither greedy of other men's wealth, nor profuse of his own; but knew how to *give* as well as to *save*. He professed a most edifying sense of religion, pretended great zeal for the reformation of manners, and was really temperate, sober, and chaste. Nor did he shed any blood but of those who were obstacles to his ambition, and such obstacles as, he thought, could not be removed by any other means. This was a prince quite *after your heart*: yet, mark his end. The detestation and horror his crimes had excited in the minds of his subjects were so fatal to him, that they enabled an *exile*, who had no colourable right to the crown, and whose talents were much inferior to his, to invade his realm, and destroy him.

MACHIAVEL.

This example, I own, seems to be of some weight against the truth of my system. But at the same time it shows, that there was nothing so new in the doctrines I published as to give any reason to charge

me with the mischiefs a kingdom may suffer from crimes committed in it by men of an unquiet and daring ambition. Human nature is wicked without any teaching. In courts, more especially, there has been, in all ages a policy practised, not less repugnant than mine to the laws of humanity and religion. Great politicians are seldom saints. Why am I singled out as worse than the rest?

GUISE.

There have been, in all times, and all states, many wicked and impious politicians. But thou art the first that ever has *taught the science of tyranny*, reduced it to rules, and instructed men how to acquire and secure it, by treachery, perjuries, assassinations, and with a particular caution, not to be stopped by any check of the conscience, or of the heart, in the course of their crimes; but to push them as far as may be necessary or conducive to their greatness and safety; though it should carry them ever such horrible lengths. It is this which has given thee a pre-eminence in guilt over all other statesmen.

MACHIAVEL.

If you had read my book with due care,

you would have found that I reasoned upon things *as they were*, and not *as they ought to be*: that I did not desire to make men usurpers, or rebels, or tyrants, but only showed, if they were so, what conduct it would be expedient for them to observe.

GUISE.

When you were a minister of state in Florence, if any man had published a book, to instruct his countrymen in the art of poisoning, and how to do it with the most certain destruction to others and security to themselves, would you have allowed him to plead in his justification, that he did not desire men to poison their neighbours; but, if they would take such evil methods of mending their fortunes, there could be no harm in letting them know what were the most effectual poisons, and by what ways they might give them without being discovered? Would you have thought it a sufficient apology for him, that he had dropped in his preface, or here and there in his book, an exhortation against the committing of murder? Without all doubt, as a magistrate concerned for the safety of the people of Florence and all mankind, you would have punished the wretch with the utmost severity,

and taken great care to destroy every copy of so pernicious a book. Yet your own admired Work contains a more baneful and more hellish art: it poisons states and kingdoms, and spreads its malignity, like a general pestilence, over the world.

MACHIAVEL.

You must acknowledge at least, that my *Discourses on Livy* are full of wise and virtuous maxims and precepts of government.

GUISE.

I do confess it; but this, I think, rather aggravates than lessens your guilt. How could you study and comment on Livy with such an acute and profound understanding, and afterwards write a book so extremely repugnant to all the lessons of policy taught by that sage and moral historian? How could you, who had seen the picture of Virtue so amiably drawn by his masterly hand, and who seemed to be sensible yourself of her charms, fall in love with a *Fury*, and set up her foul image as an object of worship to princes and kings?

MACHIAVEL.

I was seduced by my vanity.—My heart was formed to love virtue, but I

wanted to be thought *a greater genius in politics* than all who had writ on that subject before. Vanity, Sir, is in authors a passion as strong as ambition in princes, or rather it is the same passion exerting itself in a different way. I was *a Duke of Guise* in the Republic of Letters ; but my guilt is, I own, more enormous than yours, because the bad influences of it reach farther, and will be more lasting.

GUISE.

You have indeed made too many disciples, as well before the times when I lived, as during almost two centuries which have now past since your Maxims occasioned my murder at Blois. But your credit is sinking at present in Europe. I have been told by some shades arrived lately here, that a king, with whose fame all Europe resounds, has answered your book, and confuted your doctrines, with a most noble air of scorn and abhorrence. I am also assured, that in England there is a great and good king, *whose whole life has been a continued opposition to your evil system*; who has hated all cruelty, all fraud, all dissimulation; whose word has been sacred, whose honour inviolate; who has made the laws of his kingdom the rules of

his government, and good faith, and a regard for the liberty of mankind, the principles of his conduct to foreign powers; who reigns more absolutely now in the hearts of his people, and does greater things by the confidence they place in him, and by the efforts they make from the zeal of affection, than any prince ever did, or ever will do, by all the arts of iniquity you recommended.

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DIALOGUE XIII.

VIRGIL.

HORACE.

MERCURY.

SCALIGER *the Elder.*

VIRGIL.

MY dear *Horace*, your company is my greatest delight, even in the Elysian Fields. No wonder it was so when we conversed together in Rome. Never had man so genteel, so agreeable, so easy a wit, with a temper so social, so gay, so good-humoured. And then such integrity, such fidelity, such generosity in your nature ! a soul so free from all envy, so benevolent, so sincere, so placable in its anger, so warm and so constant in its affections ! You were as necessary to Mæcenas as he to Augustus. Your conversation sweetened to him all the cares and fatigues of his public life : your gaiety cheered his drooping spirits, and your counsels assisted him when he wanted advice. For you were capable, my dear *Horace*, of counselling statesmen. Your fa-

gacity, your discretion, your secrecy, your clear judgment in all affairs, recommended you to the confidence, not of Mæcenas alone, but of Augustus himself, in no small degree ; which you nobly made use of to serve your old friends of the republican party, and to confirm both the minister and the prince in their love of mild and moderate measures of government, yet with a severe restraint of licentiousness, the most dangerous enemy to the whole commonwealth.

HORACE.

To be so praised by *Virgil* would have put me in Elysium while I was alive.— And I will own (though human vanity is not so predominant here in our hearts) it adds to my happiness that my conduct and character continue to be thought by you not unworthy of your approbation. Your own were as perfect as your *Poems* themselves, that is, as near to perfection as human nature will admit of ; though your modesty made you think they still wanted correction.

VIRGIL.

Don't talk of my modesty. — How much greater was your's, when you dis-

claimed the name of a Poet, and would allow it to none but to Varius and me; you whose *Odes* are so noble, so harmonious, so sublime!

HORACE.

I felt myself too inferior to the dignity of that name.

VIRGIL.

I think you did like Augustus, when he declined the title of King, but kept all the majesty and power with which it was ever attended. Even in your *Epistles* and *Satires*, where the Poet was hid as much as he could be, you may well be compared to a prince in disguise, or in his hours of familiarity with his intimate friends: the pomp and state were let drop, but the greatness remained.

HORACE.

Well:—I will not contradict you; and (to say the truth) I should do it with a worse grace, because in some of my *Odes* I have not been so modest in speaking of my own poetry as in my *Epistles*. But to make you know your pre-eminence over me and all writers of Latin verse, I will carry you to Quintilian, the best of all Roman critics,

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who will tell you in what rank you ought to be placed. I hope you will not pretend to dispute his opinion.

VIRGIL.

Quintilian is indeed an excellent critic, and seems as much to delight in giving praise to all merit, as others, who usurp that respectable name, in abuse and detraction.—But who is this Shade that *Mercury* seems to be bringing this way? I never saw one that stalked with such pride, or had so much arrogance expressed in his looks!

HORACE.

They come towards us.—Hail, *Mercury*!—What is this ghost whom you are conducting? Has he any commands for *Virgil* or *Me*?

MERCURY.

He is one that has made very free with you both. His name is *Julius Caesar Scaliger*, and he is by profession a *Critic*.

HORACE.

Julius Caesar Scaliger! He was, I presume, a *Dictator* in Criticism. For my part, I will not pretend to oppose his sovereign power. I had enough of following Brutus

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at Philippi. Don't think I'll get into any new quarrels here !

MERCURY.

Talk to him a little :—He'll entertain you. I brought him to you on purpose.

HORACE.

Virgil, do you accost him :—I can't do it gravely : I shall laugh in his face.

VIRGIL.

Sir, may I presume to ask why you wear that frown on your brow, and cast your eyes so superciliously upon *Horace* and me ? I don't remember that Augustus ever looked down upon us with such an air of superiority, when we were his subjects.

SCALIGER.

He was only a sovereign over your bodies, and owed his power to violence and usurpation. But I have from Nature an absolute empire over the wit of all authors, who are subjected to me as the greatest of critics or *hypercritics*.

VIRGIL.

Your jurisdiction is very extensive :—

And what judgments have you been pleased to pass upon us?

SCALIGER.

You pretend to be ignorant of my decrees! but they are too well known in the other world not to have been reported to you here. As for you, *Horace*, I will tell you thus far, because it will please you. I have said, "That I had rather have writ
"the little Dialogue between you and Lydia, than have been made King of Arragon."

HORACE.

If I were alive, you should give me the kingdom, and take both the ode and the girl in return. But did you always pronounce so favourably for us?

SCALIGER.

No:—I was not such a blockhead.—I have taken both you and *Virgil* to task in several places of my most famous Work. Send for it, and read it. *Mercury* will bring it to you with the first learned ghost that arrives here from Europe. There is instruction for you in it. I don't flatter you, gentlemen; but it was my whim to commend that little *Ode*; and I never do things

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by halves. When I give praise, it is with a liberal hand, to show my royal magnificence. But I generally blame, to exert all the vigour of my *censorian power*, and keep my subjects in awe.

HORACE.

You did not confine your empire to Poets; you exercised it, no doubt, over all other writers.

SCALIGER.

I was a divine, a philosopher, a statesman, an orator, an historian, a poet, without doing the drudgery of any of these, but only by censuring those who did, and showing thereby the superiority I had over them all in their several talents.

HORACE.

A short way, indeed, to universal fame ! And I suppose you were very peremptory in your decisions.

SCALIGER.

Peremptory ! Ay.—If any man dared to contradict my opinions, I called him a Dunce, a Rascal, a Villain, and frightened the fellow out of his wits.

VIRGIL.

But what said the rest of mankind to this method of disputation?

SCALIGER.

They generally believed me, because of the confidence of my assertions; and thought I could not be so insolent, or so angry, if I was not very sure of being in the right. Besides, in my controversies, I had a great help from the language I wrote in: for one can scold and call names with a much better grace in Latin than French, or any tame, modern tongue.

HORACE.

Have not I heard, that you pretended to derive your descent from the princes of Verona?

SCALIGER.

Pretended! do you pretend to deny it?

HORACE.

Not I indeed:—genealogy is not my science. If you should claim to descend from King Midas, I would not dispute it.

VIRGIL.

I wonder, *Scaliger*, that you stooped to so low an ambition. Was it not greater to reign over all Mount Parnassus than over a petty Italian state?

SCALIGER.

You say well.—I must own I was there in an error, and condescended too much to vulgar opinion. The ignorant multitude think that a *prince* is a greater man than a *critic*. Their folly made me desire to claim kindred with the *Scalas* of Verona.

HORACE.

Pray, *Mercury*, how do you mean to dispose of this august person? You can't think it proper to leave him with us.—He must be placed with the Demigods; he must go to Olympus.

MERCURY.

Be not afraid.—I don't intend he shall trouble you long. I brought him hither to shew you a creature you never had seen, and to divert myself with your surprise. Whatever thoughts you may have of him, he is the chief of all modern critics, the most renowned captain of that dreadful

band. And before he went mad, he had, I assure you, good parts, and great learning. But I will now explain to you the original cause of the absurdities he has uttered. His mind was formed, like some perspective glasses, in such a manner, that it either diminished or magnified all objects too much; but above all others it magnified him to himself. This made him so proud that it quite turned his brain. Now I have had my sport with him, I think it will be an act of charity in me to restore him to his senses; or rather to give what Nature denied him, a rational judgment. You shall see what a change I will work in him at once.—Come hither, *Scaliger*.—By this touch I give thee power to see things as they are, and among others thyself.—Look, gentlemen, how his countenance is fallen in a moment! Hear what he says:—He is talking to himself.

SCALIGER.

Bless me! with what persons have I been discoursing! With *Virgil* and *Horace*! How durst I open my lips in their presence? how could I presume to appear in their sight? For what am I? A head stuffed with a lumber of learning, a little petulant wit, and no sense.—Good *Mercury*, I be-

seech you, let me retire from a company for which I know I am very unfit. Let me go and hide my head in the deepest shade of that grove which I see in the valley. When I have performed a quarantine there, I will crawl on my knees to the feet of those great and illustrious shades whom I have offended, and beg them to see me burn my impertinent books of Criticism in the fiery billows of Phlegethon with my own hands.

MERCURY.

Go and do penance. Thou mayest then scape the judgment of Minos. This mortification of knowing thyself is damnation sufficient to atone for thy arrogance in the other world.

DIALOGUE XIV.

BOILEAU.

POPE.

BOILEAU.

MR *Pope*! you have done me great honour. I am told that you made me your model in poetry, and walked on Parnassus in the same paths which I had trod.

POPE.

We both followed Horace: but in our manner of imitation, and in the turn of our natural genius, there was, I believe, a great deal of resemblance, which I am proud that others observe. Our tempers too were the same in many respects. They were both very warm with the love of good morals, true wit, and sound learning, and fond of the glory of our being their champions. But they were too irritable, and too easily hurt by offences, even from the lowest of men. We turned the keen edge of our wit against those whom it was more a shame to contend with than

an honour to vanquish. Yet our Muse was not always severe and ill-humoured. She could smile on our friends, and understood how to praise as well as to blame.

BOILEAU.

It would, perhaps, have been better if in some instances we had neither praised nor blamed so much. But in Panegyric and Satire moderation is thought to be flat and insipid.

POPE.

Moderation is a cold *unpoetical* virtue. Mere historical truth should be written in prose. And therefore I think you did very well to burn your *History of Louis le Grand*, and trust his fame, and your own, to your Poems.

BOILEAU.

When those Poems were written he was the idol of the French nation as much as mine. If you and I had not known how to speak to the passions as well as to the sober sense of mankind, we should not have been the favourite authors of the French and the English, nor have acquired that kind of despotic authority in the empire of Wit, which we both held as long as we lived.

POPE.

The praise which my friends had from me was *unbought*. In this, at least, I may boast a superiority over the *pensioned Boileau*.

BOILEAU.

A *pension* in France was an honourable distinction. Had you been a Frenchman you would have sought it; had I been an Englishman I should have declined it. If our merit in other respects be the same, *this* will not make a great difference in it.

POPE.

It is not for me to draw a comparison between our Works. But, if I may believe the best Critics with whom I have talked, my *Rape of the Lock* is not inferior to your *Lutrin*; and my *Art of Criticism* may well be compared with your *Art of Poetry*: my *Ethic Epistles* are thought at least to be equal to yours, and my *Satires* much better,

BOILEAU.

Hold, Mr *Pope*.—If there really is such a sympathy in our natures as you have supposed, there may be reason to fear

that, if we go on comparing our Works, we shall not part in good friendship.

POPE.

No, no : — the mild air of the Elyſian Fields has ſoftened my temper, as I preſume it has your's. But in truth our reputations are nearly on a level. We both of us carried the beauty of our *diſtion*, and the harmony of our *numbers*, to the higheſt perfection that our languages would admit. Our Poems were laboured and poliſhed to the utmoſt degree of correſtneſs, yet without loſing their fire, or the pleaſing appearance of freedom and eaſe. The ſpirit of the Ancients ſeemed to animate all of them; and we both borrowed much from thoſe excellent maſters; though you, perhaps, more than I: but our Imitations had ſtill an original air.

BOILEAU.

I will confeſs, Sir, (to ſhow you that the Elyſian climate has had its proper effects upon me), I will fairly confeſs, without any ill humour, that in your *Temple of Fame*, your *Windſor Foreſt*, your *Eloïſa to Abelard*, and ſome other pieces you wrote in your youth, there is more imagination, more ſweetneſs, more fire of poetry, than

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in any of mine. I will also allow, that you hit the *manner* of Horace, and the *sty delicacy* of his wit, more exactly than I, or than any other man who has writ since his time. Nor could I, nor did even Lucretius himself, make *philosophy* so *poetical*, or embellish it with such charms, as you have, Mr Pope, in your *Essay on Man*.

POPE.

What do you think of my *Homer*?

BOILEAU.

Your *Homer* is the most spirited, the most poetical, the most elegant, the most pleasing translation, that ever was made of any ancient poem; tho' not so much in the *manner* of the original, or so exact to the sense in all places, as might be desired. But when I consider the years you spent in this work, and how many fine original poems you might with less difficulty have produced in that time, I can't but regret that you should have employed your talents in a way wherein their full energy could not be seen. A great Poet, tied down to a tedious translation, is a *Columbus chained to an Oar*. What new regions of fancy might you have explored, if you could have freely expanded your sails, and steered your

own course, under the conduct of your own genius!—But I am still more angry with you for your edition of *Shakespeare*. The work of an Editor was below you, and your mind was unfit for the drudgery of it. Would any body think of employing a Raphael to clean an old picture? How could you, Sir, undertake such a task?

POPE.

The principal cause of it was my great zeal for the honour of Shakespeare: and, if you knew all his beauties as well as I, you would not be surpris'd at that zeal. No other author had ever so copious, so bold, so *creative* an imagination, with so perfect a knowledge of the passions, the humours, and sentiments of mankind. He painted all characters, from heros and kings, down to innkeepers and peasants, with equal truth and equal force. If human nature was quite destroyed, and no monument left of it except his works, other beings might know *what Man was* from those Writings.

BOILEAU.

Your account of him is just: and, tho' I find the most shocking absurdities in his plays; absurdities which no critic of my

nation can pardon, yet I admire him as a prodigy of genius and parts.

POPE.

You would admire him still more, if you could have the pleasure to see the chief characters in all his best Plays represented by an actor who appeared on the stage a little before I left the world. He has shown the English nation more excellencies in Shakespeare than ever the quickest wits could discern, and has imprinted them on the heart with a livelier sense than the most sensible natures could feel without his help.

BOILEAU.

The variety, spirit, and force of his action, have been much praised to me by many of his countrymen, whose shades I converse with, and who all speak of him as we do of *Baron*, our most admired actor. I have also heard of another, who has now left the stage, but who filled with great dignity, force, and elevation, some tragic parts, and excelled so much in the comic, that none ever has gained a higher applause.

POPE.

He was indeed a most perfect comedian. In the part of *Falstaff* particularly, wherein the utmost force of Shakespeare's humour appears, he attained to such perfection, that he was not an Actor; he was the man described by Shakespeare; he was *Falstaff* himself!

BOILEAU.

That character is not well understood by the French. Some of our critics suppose it belongs, not to comedy, but to farce; whereas the English see in it the finest and highest strokes of natural humour. Nature perhaps may vary so much in different countries, particularly with regard to *humorous* characters, as to account for these different judgments. But don't you allow, Mr *Pope*, that our Tragic and Comic writers are, upon the whole, more perfect than your's? If you deny it, I think I will appeal to the Athenians, the only judges who are qualified to decide the dispute. I will refer it to Euripides, Sophocles, and Menander.

POPE.

I am afraid of those judges; for I see

them continually walking hand in hand, and engaged in the most friendly discourse with Corneille, Racine, and Moliere. Our dramatic writers seem not so fond of their company : they sometimes shove rudely by them, and give themselves airs of superiority. They slight their reprimands, and laugh at their precepts. In short, they will be tried by *their Country* alone ; and that judicature is partial.

BOILEAU.

Well ; I will press this question no farther.—But this let me ask you ; which do you prefer, Racine, or Corneille ?

POPE.

The *Athalia* of Racine is, in my judgment, equal to the sublimest plays of Corneille, and the tender passions are certainly touched by that elegant and most pathetic writer with a much finer hand. He is also by far more correct than the other, and more harmonious and noble in his versification.

BOILEAU.

The particular friendship I had with Racine, and my partiality for his writings, make me hear with great pleasure the pre-

ference given to him above Corneille by so judicious a critic as you.

POPE.

My opinion is not so decisive in favour of him as you suppose. That he excelled his competitor in the points I have mentioned can't, I think, be denied; but the spirit and majesty of ancient Rome were never so well and truly expressed as they are by Corneille. Nor has any French writer such a masculine strength and greatness of thought.—Racine is the Swan described by ancient Poets, which rises on downy wings to the clouds, and sings a sweet, but a gentle and plaintive note. Corneille is the Eagle, which soars to the skies on bold and sounding pinions, and fears not to perch on the sceptre of Jupiter, or to bear in his pounces the lightning of the God.

BOILEAU.

I am glad to find, Mr *Pope*, that in praising Corneille you run into poetry, which is not the language of *sober criticism*, though I own it is sometimes used by Longinus.

POPE.

I caught the fire from the idea of Corneille.— But let me now, in my turn, describe your opinion of our Epic poet Milton.

BOILEAU.

Longinus, perhaps, would prefer him to all other writers; for he excels even Homer in the *sublime*. But other critics, who require variety, and agreeableness, and a correct regularity of thought and design in an Epic poem; who can endure no absurdities, no extravagant fictions, would place him far below Virgil.

POPE.

His genius was indeed so vast and sublime, that his Work seems beyond the limits of Criticism, as his subject is beyond the limits of Nature. The bright and excessive blaze of poetical fire, which shines in so many parts of his Poem, will hardly permit one to see its faults: but that it has faults, and great ones too, cannot be denied.

BOILEAU.

The taste of your countrymen is very much changed since the days of Charles

the Second, when Dryden was thought a greater poet than Milton !

POPE.

The politics of Milton at that time brought his poetry into disgrace : for it is a rule with the English, they never will see any good in a man whose politics they dislike. But, as their notions of government are subject to change, men of parts have their turn of being admired after having been slighted ; and those who had before been in vogue are despised. This happened to Dryden as well as to Milton. He lived to see his writings, together with his politics, quite out of fashion. But, even in the days of his highest prosperity, when the generality of the people admired his *Almanzor*, and thought his *Indian Emperor* the perfection of tragedy, the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Rochester, the two wittiest noblemen our country has produced, attacked his fame, and turned the rants of his heroes, the jargon of his spirits, and the absurdity of his plots, into just ridicule.

BOILEAU.

You have made him amends by the praise you have given him in some of your Writings.

POPE.

I owed him that praise, as my master in the art of versification. Yet I will freely subscribe to the censures which have been passed on many of his works. I will deliver him up to the critics to be mangled and torn by them as much as they please. But when they have pulled off every part of him which is not too hard for their teeth, there will remain still enough to make a great poet. You, Sir, I am sure, will particularly admire him as an excellent satirist. His *Abfalom and Abithophel*, and his *Mac Flecko*, are masterpieces in that way of writing. But his Muse had endowed him with various powers. His *Ode on the Feast of Alexander* is, perhaps, the most perfect of all Lyric poems that modern times have produced. His *Tales*, though composed in a very old age, and though some of the subjects are not well chosen, have great spirit, and a rich vein of poetry in them. Even the worst of his plays have very fine verses *embroidered into them*; and the Duke of Buckingham must himself have approved the greatest part of his *Don Sebastian*, his *All for Love*, and his *Spanish Friar*. The most inexcusable fault of his comedies is the immora-

lity, profaneness, and indecency in them : but I am sorry to say, all our Comic writers, except Shakelpeare, Johnson, and Steele, have that fault. Fletcher is shocking. Etheridge, Wycherly, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar, have painted the manners of the times when they wrote with a masterly hand ! but they are too often such manners that a virtuous man, and much more a virtuous woman, must be greatly offended at the representation. In this respect the French stage is far better than ours. *That* is indeed a school of morality. Folly is laughed at ; but Vice is exposed in most of their comedies to contempt and to hatred. No false colours are laid on to conceal her deformity, and make her appear an agreeable object ; but those with which she paints herself are there taken off.

BOILEAU.

I wish I could say, that some of our best writers in other ways had not been as guilty as your Comic poets, of the heinous offence of *debauching the Muses*. My friend, La Fontaine, in some of his *Tales*, is as faulty in that as he is admirable in other respects.

POPE.

He has indeed been too wanton and sportive with vice: but I agree with you in admiring the natural spirit and ease of his wit, that *simplicity* mixed with elegance and justness of thought, which characterises his genius, and makes it seem quite *original*, though all the *matter* of his writings is borrowed from others.

BOILEAU.

I think you have a writer not inferior to him in the best of his *Tales*, and who seems to have copied his manner.—I mean Mr Prior.

POPE.

There is much resemblance in their manner; but there is also some difference. Prior, I think, had more *judgment*, La Fontaine more *simplicity*. The former owed much to Art and Learning, the latter all to Nature. But Prior's harp had more strings to it than La Fontaine's. He was a fine poet in many different ways, La Fontaine but in one.

BOILEAU.

There is a writer of *Heroic Poetry*, who

lived before Milton, and whom some of your countrymen praise very highly ; tho' he is little known in France. I see him sometimes with Homer and Virgil, but oftener with Tasso and Ariosto.

POPE.

I understand you mean *Spenser*. He had a great Poetical Genius. There is a force and a beauty in some of his *images* and his *descriptions* equal to any in the best of those writers you have seen him converse with ; but he had not always the art of *shading* his pictures. He brings the minute and disagreeable parts too much into sight ; and with many sublime and noble ideas mingles too frequently vulgar and mean. His Poem is *moral* and *allegorical* : but the *allegory* being continued throughout the whole work, fatigues the mind ; and as every canto has a different fable, and a different hero, there is no passion to interest the heart in *the Whole*, nor any permanent object to fix the attention. Had he chosen a subject proper for Epic poetry, he seems to have had elevation and strength in his genius sufficient to make him a *great Epic Poet* : but now he can hardly be ranked in that class.

BOILEAU.

Who is the poet but lately arrived in Elysium, whom I saw Spenser lead in, and present him to Virgil, as a writer related to him in his *Georgics*? There was on his head a garland composed of the flowers that blow in every season, with evergreens intermixed; but over it hung a cloud, which sometimes obscured it, and would scarce let me see the face of the poet!

POPE.

By your description it must be *Thomson*. He painted Nature exactly, and with great strength of pencil. His imagination was rich, extensive, sublime; but his diction was frequently *obscure* and *affected*. Nor did he know when to *stop*, or what to *reject*.

BOILEAU.

I should suppose he wrote tragedies upon the *Greek model*: for he is often admitted into the grove of Euripides, and seems to be in particular favour with that great Tragic Poet.

POPE.

He enjoys that distinction both as a *Tragedian* and as a *Moralist*: for not only

in his plays, but all his other works, there is an instructive *morality*, rendered more touching by the fine and delicate sentiments of a most *tender feeling heart*.

BOILEAU.

St Evremond has brought me acquainted with Waller.—I was surprised to find in his works a politeness and *gallantry* equal to the most *gallant* of our writers. Sarrazin and Voiture did not praise the ladies, to whom they made court, more genteelly than he; and there is in his verses a spirit of poetry not to be found in any of theirs. Some of his lines upon Sacharissa are even *sublime*. In his comparison between himself and Apollo, as the lover of Daphne, and in that between Amoret and Sacharissa, there is a *finesse* and beauty of wit that the most elegant and refined of our writers have never exceeded. But his *Epistle to Cromwell*, and his *Poem on the Death of that great, wicked Man*, are writ with a force and greatness of manner, which, though there are blemishes in them, give him a rank among the poets of the first class.

POPE.

Mr Waller was doubtless a very fine

writer. His Muse was as well qualified as the Graces themselves to dress out a Venus; and he could even adorn the brows of a conqueror with the most fragrant and beautiful wreaths: but he had some low and puerile thoughts, which unaccountably mixed with the elegant and the noble, like school-boys or mob admitted into a palace. There was an intemperance and a wantonness in his wit which he could not restrain. He wrote little to the understanding, and less to the heart; but he frequently charms the imagination, and sometimes is able to strike it with flashes of the highest *sublime*. — We had also in England another poet of the same age, extremely admired by all his contemporaries, in whose works there is still a greater redundancy of imagination, more affectation of wit, a worse taste, and less judgment: but he touched the heart more, and had much finer feelings. — I mean Mr *Cowley*.

BOILEAU.

I have been often solicited to admire his writings by his friend Dr Spratt. He seems to me a great wit, and a very good man, but not a good poet. Of late I hear he is sunk very much in the opinion of the English. Yet I cannot but think, that if

some of the superfluities of his wit were given by Apollo to some of their modern bards, who write common-place morals in very smooth verse, without any absurdity, but without one new thought, or one lively spark of imagination, it would be a great favour to them, and do them more good than all the rules in my *Art of Poetry*, and your's of *Criticism*.

POPE.

I am much of your mind.—But when I left the world, I left in England some poets whom you will admire, not only for the harmony and correctness, but the spirit and genius, which appeared in their writings. Fame will bring their works to you when they are dead; but she seldom is fond of doing justice to the living.

BOILEAU.

France too has produced some excellent writers, who were not yet known at the time of my death.—Of one particularly I hear wonders. Fame to him is as kind as if he had been dead a thousand years. She brings his praises to me from all parts of Europe.—I dare say you guess that I speak of *Voltaire*.

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POPE.

I do, and esteem him a wonderful genius. When the King of Prussia drew him from Paris to Berlin, he had a whole academy of *Belles Lettres* in *Him* alone. But that prince has himself such talents for poetry as no other monarch has ever possessed. Voltaire has taught him his art, and has left him his lyre. It is amazing, that amidst the tumult of arms, a king so employed in the greatest affairs should touch that lyre so sweetly, and draw from it notes, which Alcæus or Horace would have heard with delight. What an astonishing compass and force must there be in his mind, what an heroic tranquillity and firmness in his heart, that he can, one day, compose an ode or epistle in the most elegant verse, and the next, fight a battle with the conduct and courage of a Gustavus Adolphus !

BOILEAU.

I envy Voltaire so noble a subject both for his verse and his prose. But if that prince will write his own *Commentaries*, he will want no historian.

POPE.

Voltaire is, I hear, retired from Berlin

to the territory of Geneva. It does great honour to Swisserland, but not much to France, that the *finest wit* she has left to boast of should chuse a country-house at the foot of the Alps rather than Paris, or any villa in the neighbourhood of that city, for the retreat of his age.

BOILEAU.

I am told that in France he did not use his wit with so much discretion as I did mine. And even his exile, I fear, has not taught him enough to curb its excesses. There is in most of his writings a noble and philosophical freedom of thought, which may be reckoned amongst their highest perfections: but all liberty has its bounds; beyond which if it goes it changes its nature. Would to Heaven he would reflect before he comes *hither*, that his works will outlive him, and do good or harm through several ages; that many nations will read them; and that the judgment past *here* on the writer himself will be according to the design and tendency of them, and to the extent of their good or evil effects.

POPE.

It would be well for all Europe if other

wits of your country, who give the *ton* to the present age, had the same serious thoughts that you wish to Voltaire. Witty writings, directed to serve the good ends of Religion and Virtue, are like the lights hung out in a *pharos*, to guide the mariners safe through dangerous seas: but the brightness of those that are impious or immoral shines only to betray, and lead men to destruction.

BOILEAU.

Have your countrymen lately had no such treacherous guides?

POPE.

Too many; and they have been followed too much: I speak it with sorrow, — Would to God that both England and France may now learn, that true wisdom is *Virtue*, and true virtue *Religion*. False philosophy will not then mislead and corrupt them. — I also could wish that a taste for the *frivolous* may not prevail too much in the French. They trifle agreeably; but there is a great difference between gathering flowers at the foot of Parnassus and climbing the arduous heights of the mountain. The last must be done by those who aspire to the *Temple of Fame*; and to do it

requires both labour and strength. If the present mode should prevail much longer in France, your countrymen will be all too lazy or weak to attempt such an enterprize. But I would have them continue the rivals of the English in vigorous wit and useful learning. The competition is good for both nations. May they contend for the palm of genius and science till the end of the world; and may that contention be friendly, not hostile! There is nothing which so contracts and debases the mind as national envy. True wit, like true virtue, loves its own image, in whatever part of the globe it is found.

DIALOGUE XV.

OCTAVIA. PORTIA. ARRIA.

PORTIA.

HOW has it happened, *Octavia*, that *Arria* and I, who have higher places than you in the Temple of Fame, should have a lower here in Elysium? We are told, that the virtues you showed as a wife were greater than our's. Be so good as to explain to us what were those virtues. It is the privilege of this happy place, that one can bear superiority without mortification. The jealousy of precedence died with the rest of our mortal frailties. Tell us then your own story. We will sit down in this myrtle grove, and listen to it with pleasure.

OCTAVIA.

Noble ladies, the pride of our sex and of Rome, I will not refuse to obey your commands, though it recalls to my mind some scenes which my heart would wish to forget. There can be but one reason

why Minos should have given a preference here to my conjugal virtues, and that is, that the trial of them was harder than your's.

ARRIA.

What! Madam: harder than to die for your husband! We die for our's.

OCTAVIA.

You did, for husbands who loved you, and were the most virtuous men of the ages they lived in; who trusted you with their lives, their honour, their fame. To outlive such husbands is harder than to die *for* them, or *with* them. But Mark Antony, to whom my brother, for reasons of state, gave my hand, loved another, not me. And yet he has told me himself I was handsomer than his Cleopatra. Younger I certainly was; and to men *that* is generally a charm sufficient to turn the scale in one's favour. I had been used to be loved: I was loved by Marcellus. Antony said, he loved me, when he pledged to me his faith. Perhaps he did for a time: a new handsome woman might, from his natural inconstancy, make him forget his former attachment. He was but too amiable.—His very vices had charms be-

yond other men's virtues. Such spirit! such fire! such a towering pride! He seemed made to command; to govern the world; to govern it with such ease, that the weight of it did not rob him of an hour of pleasure. And while his inclination for me continued, this haughty lord of mankind, who could hardly bring his high spirit to treat my brother, his partner in empire, with proper respect, was as submissive to me, as obedient to every wish of my heart, as the most humble lover that ever sighed in the vales of Arcadia. Thus he seduced my affection from the manes of Marcellus, and fixed it on himself. He fixed it, ladies, (I own it with shame) more fondly than it had ever been fixed on Marcellus. And when he had done so, he scorned me, he left me, he returned to Cleopatra. Think who I was: — the sister of Cæsar, sacrificed to a vile Egyptian queen, the harlot of Julius, the disgrace of her sex. Every outrage was added to incense me still more. He gave her, as public marks of his love, a great part of the empire of Rome in the East*. He read her love-letters openly in his tribunal, even while he was judging the causes

* See Plutarch's Life of Antony.

of kings. Nay he left his tribunal, and one of the best Roman orators pleading before him, to follow her litter, in which she chanced to pass by at that time. But what was more grievous to me than all these demonstrations of his extravagant passion, in a letter he wrote to my brother himself he had the assurance to call her *his wife* *. Which of you, Ladies, could have borne this?

ARRIA.

Not I, Madam, in truth. Had I been in your place, the dagger with which I pierced my own bosom, to show my dear Pætus *how easy it was to die*, that dagger should I have plunged into Antony's heart, if piety to the Gods, and respect to the purity of my own soul, had not stopped my hand. But, I believe, I should have killed myself; not, as I did, out of love to my husband, but out of shame and indignation at the wrongs I endured.

PORTIA.

I must own, *Octavia*, that to bear such a treatment as your's was harder to a woman than *to swallow fire*.

* V. Suetonium in Augusto Cæsare.

OCTAVIA.

Yet I did bear it, Madam, without a complaint which could hurt or offend the cruel man *. I used my utmost endeavours to hinder my brother from making war against him on my account. Nay, more; at his return from his Parthian expedition, which his impatience to bear a long absence from Cleopatra had made unfortunate and inglorious, I went to meet him in Syria, and carried with me magnificent presents of cloaths and money for his troops, a great number of horses, and two thousand picked soldiers, equipped and armed like my brother's Pretorian Bands. He sent to stop me at Athens, because his mistress was with him, and he was ashamed to see us together. I obeyed his commands: but I wrote to him, by one of his most faithful friends, a letter, expressing great resignation, and such a tenderness for him, as I thought might have power to touch his heart. My envoy served me so well, he set my fidelity in such a light, and gave such reasons to Antony why he ought to see and receive me with kindness, that Cleopatra was extremely alarmed. All

* See Plutarch's Life of Antony.

her arts were employed to prevent his seeing me, and to draw him again into Egypt*. — Those arts prevailed. He sent me back into Italy, and gave himself up more weakly than ever to the witchcraft of that *Circe*. He added Africa to the states he had bestowed on her before, and declared Cæsario, her spurious son by Julius Cæsar, heir to all her dominions, except Phœnicia and Cilicia, which, with the Upper Syria, he gave to Ptolemy, his second son by her; and at the same time declared his eldest son by her, named Alexander, whom he had espoused to the Princess of Media, heir to that kingdom, and king of Armenia, nay, and of the whole Parthian empire, which he proposed to conquer for *him*. The children I had brought him he wholly neglected, as if they had been bastards. I wept, — I lamented his fate and my own; — but I never reproached him. My brother, provoked at so many indignities, commanded me to quit the house of my husband at Rome, and come into his. — I refused to obey him. — I continued in Antony's house; I persisted to take the same care of his children by Fulvia as of my own. I gave all his friends

* See Plutarch's Life of Antony.

at Rome my protection, and all the assistance that was in my power. I implored my brother not to make my jealousy or my wrongs the cause of a Civil war. But the injuries done to the empire and Rome by Antony's conduct could not be forgiven. When he found he should draw the Roman arms on himself, he sent orders to me to go out of his house. I did so, but carried with me all his children by Fulvia, except Antyllus, the eldest, who was then with him in Egypt. After his death and Cleopatra's, I took her children by him, and bred them up with my own. I married her daughter to Juba, king of Mauritania, the most accomplished and the handtomest prince in the world. I raised Julius Antonius, the second son of my husband by his first wife, to such a degree of favour and power, that, except Agrippa, and the sons of Livia, he saw none above him in the court of Augustus. In short, I did for Antony's children, even those whom he had by Cleopatra, my rival, all that *Portia* or *Arria* could have done for their children by Brutus and Thrasea, if they had survived them.

PORTIA.

The sentence of Minos is very just. I thank the Gods that my virtue was not

put to such trials. Are not you, *Arria*, of the same mind?

ARRIA.

I am:—I confess her superiority.—Yet let me ask her one question. Tell me, *Octavia*, did not your pride and resentment entirely cure you of your passion for Antony, as soon as you saw him go back to Cleopatra? And was not all your conduct after that time the effect of cool reason, undisturbed by the agitations of jealous, unhappy, and tortured love?

OCTAVIA.

You probe my heart very deeply. That I had some help from my pride and resentment I will not deny. But I was not become *indifferent* to my husband. His idea was dear, too dear to me still. I loved the Antony, who had been my lover and friend, more than I was angry with the Antony, who forsook me and loved another woman. Had he left Cleopatra, and returned to me again with his former affection, I should have loved him as well as before.

ARRIA.

Madam, your heart is the most perfect

model of conjugal virtue. The wound I gave mine was, I own, but a scratch, to many you suffered. But I don't know whether it is not good for the world that there are not in it many *Octavias*. It would too much encourage the men to use their wives ill. *Too good subjects are apt to make bad kings.*

PORTIA.

True, *Arria*; the wives of Brutus and Thrasea Pætus may be allowed to have spirits a little rebellious. *Octavia* was bred in the court of her brother. Subjection and patience were better taught there than in our rough schools.

DIALOGUE XVI.

LOUISE DE COLIGNI, *Princess of Orange.*
FRANCES WALSHINGHAM, *Countess of Essex*
and of Clanrickard; before Lady SIDNEY.

Princess of ORANGE.

MADAM, they tell me, our destinies had a great and surprising conformity while we lived in the world together. I was the daughter of Admiral Coligni, you of Secretary Walsingham, the two greatest statesmen and ablest supports of the Protestant cause in France and in England. I was married to Teligni, the finest gentleman of our party, the most admired for his valour, his virtue, his learning; you to Sir Philip Sidney, who bore the same character among the English. We both lost our husbands by violent deaths, and both married again with still greater men; I with William Prince of Orange, the hero and founder of the Dutch Commonwealth*;

* See Du Maurier Memoires de Hollande, from p. 177 to 190. Biographia Britann. Essex.

you with Devereux Earl of Essex, the favourite of Elizabeth, and of the whole English nation. But, alas ! to complete the resemblance of our fates, we both saw those second husbands, who had raised us so high, cut off in the meridian of their glory and greatness ; mine by the pistol of an assassin ; your's, more wretchedly still, by the axe, as a traitor and rebel.

Countess of CLANRICKARD.

There was indeed in our destinies such a conformity as seldom is found between that of two persons in the same age. Your's carried you higher, but I think it was more unhappy than mine. For my father lived honourably, and died in peace ; your's was assassinated in his old age. How did you, Madam, comfort yourself, and recover your spirits, under all your misfortunes ?

Princess of ORANGE.

The Prince of Orange left an infant son to my care. The educating of him to be worthy of so renowned and illustrious a father, to be the heir of his virtue as well as his greatness, and the affairs of the Commonwealth, in which I interested myself for his sake, so filled my mind, that they took from me the sense of my grief, which

nothing but such a great and important scene of business, such a necessary talk of private and public duty, could have ever relieved. But let me enquire of you, in my turn; how did your heart find a balm to soften the pain of the wounds it had suffered? What employed your widowed hours after the death of your Essex?

Countess of CLANRICKARD.

Madam, I did not long continue a widow: I married again.

Princess of ORANGE.

How, Madam, married again! With what prince, what king did you marry? The ambition of your heart could surely be satisfied with no meaner husband. The widow of Sir Philip Sidney and of my Lord Essex could not descend from them to a subject of less illustrious fame; and where could you find one equal to either?

Countess of CLANRICKARD.

I did not seek for one, Madam: the heroism of the former, and the ambition of the latter, had made me very unhappy. I desired a quiet life, and the joys of wedded love, with an agreeable, virtuous, well-born, unambitious, unenterprising

husband. All this I found in the Earl of Clanrickard : and, believe me, Madam, I enjoyed more solid felicity in Ireland with him than I ever had known with my two former husbands, in all the pride of their glory, when England and Europe resounded with their praise.

Princess of ORANGE.

Can it be possible, that the daughter of Walsingham, and the beloved wife of Sidney and Essex, should have sentiments so inferior to the great minds which she sprung from, and to which she was matched ! Believe me, Madam, there was no hour, of all the years that I lived after the death of the Prince of Orange, in which I would have exchanged the delight that I had in hearing his praise, and seeing the monuments of his glory in the free Commonwealth his wisdom had founded, for any other joys this world could give. The cares that I shared with him, while Providence suffered him to continue below, were a happiness to my mind, because they improved and exalted its powers. The remembrance of them was dear to me after I lost him. I thought his great soul would look down upon mine with some tenderness of affection, as its fellow-labourer in

the heroic and divine work of delivering and freeing his country. But to be divorced from that soul ! to be no longer his wife ! to be the consort of an inferior, inglorious husband ! I had much rather have died a thousand deaths than that my heart should have once conceived such a thought.

Countess of CLANRICKARD.

Your Highness ought not to judge of all hearts by your own. The ruling passion of *that* was ambition. My inclinations were not so noble as your's, but better suited, perhaps, to the nature of Woman. I loved Sir Philip Sidney, I loved the Earl of Essex, rather as amiable men than as heroes and statesmen. They were so taken up with their wars and state-affairs, that my tenderness for them was often neglected. The Earl of Clanrickard was wholly mine. He was brave, but had not that *spirit of Chivalry* with which Sir Philip Sidney was strongly possessed. He had the esteem of Elizabeth, but did not, like Essex, aspire to her *love* ; nor did he wish to be the rival of Carr, or of Villers, in the affection of James. Such was the man on whom my last choice bestowed my hand, and whose kindness compensated for

all my misfortunes ! Providence has assigned to different tempers different comforts in their afflictions. To you it gave the education of a prince, the government of a state, the pride of being called the wife of a Hero ; to me it gave a good *loving* husband, retirement, quiet, wealth, and a fair reputation, though not in a degree so exalted as your's. If our whole sex were to chuse between your consolations and mine, I verily think your Highness would find very few of your taste. But I respect the sublimity of your ideas. Now, that we have no bodies, they appear less unnatural than I should have thought them in the other world.

Princess of ORANGE.

Adieu, Madam ; our souls are of a different order, and were not made to converse with each other.

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END OF VOLUME FIRST.



